

PUBLIC PARKS GO PRIVATE

June 30-July 13, 1997

IN THESE TIMES

FLAWED

Peace



**Netanyahu's realpolitik
exposes the fatal
weaknesses in the
Oslo peace accords.**

**Rashid Khalidi
reports**

\$2.50/CANADA \$3.50



EDITORIAL

THE LEFT RETURNS

In 1848, Karl Marx wrote in the *Communist Manifesto* that a specter was haunting Europe. Now, 150 years later, a new specter has appeared. This time, however, it's not working people who are threatening the ruling powers of old Europe, but the reverse. Deficit-slashing governments across Western Europe are threatening to roll back workers' hard-earned rights and to lower their standard of living. As one young German told the *New York Times*, in his country, as in all of Europe, people are having "to work harder for less money" and are finding that "the security that they had in the past just won't be there" in the future. This is happening, he said, because Europe is "going the American way."

Once, the "American way" meant prosperity and a steady increase in the comforts of life. Now, however, it means balancing budgets on the backs of working people—by cutting social spending and by weakening government regulations that protect workers' health and the environment. Made in the U.S.A., this bill of goods is sold at home and abroad as "modernization." While dictating that working people make sacrifices, allegedly to protect their children's future well-being, such policies favor little more than vastly increased corporate profits.

This is corporate America's Cold War dividend. It is starkly different from the drastic reductions in military spending—and the freeing up of resources for social spending—that most Americans expected to see following the collapse of the Soviet Union. But that country's demise exposed the idea of socialism to debilitating ridicule and disoriented much of the world's left. Because both Communists and Western ideologues had equated socialism with the Soviet system, the break-up of the Soviet empire left a gigantic political vacuum, which free marketers rushed to fill.

We predicted at the time that it wouldn't take long for the promises of these free-market economists in Eastern Europe and Russia to sour—and it didn't. Throughout Eastern Europe, Communists have made startling comebacks because they are the only organized alternative to the free-market carpetbaggers.

In Western Europe, the swings have been less drastic and

have taken longer, but a similar pattern has emerged. For almost a decade, leftists were on the defensive as the free marketers gnawed away at their power and programs. But the erosion of hard-earned health care, education, pensions and vacation time—not to mention high unemployment rates—finally provoked a strong reaction all across Europe.

Italy was the first to change, when it elected a center-left government a year ago. Now the British Labor Party has crushed the Tories, and France's Socialists have won an unexpected victory over the right. As Italy's Prime Minister Romano Prodi says, "the European political picture has changed completely in one year and one month." Indeed, of the 15 members of the European Union, only two—Germany and Spain—now have right-wing governments. Even in Canada, the New Democratic Party was the success story of the day in the June elections [see "In Short," page 7]. The NDP,

which had only nine seats in the previous parliament, won 11 percent of the national vote and took 21 seats.

Of course, it's too early to know the full import of these events. In Britain, Tony Blair talks about a "third way" in which "an open, successful and competitive economy" is married to "a just, decent and humane society." While that could mean many things, it clearly

reflects a popular rejection of Tory social policies. In France, Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin is less ambiguous. He believes that "public services must remain central," and that "market forces—if there is no attempt to control them—will threaten the very idea of civilization."

All of which means that we are entering a new era of world politics, one that has the potential for substantial progressive change. ◀

*Working people
in Europe have
finally had enough of
U.S.-style austerity.*

PERSONNEL MATTERS

In These Times is pleased to announce that Pat Arnow has joined our staff as culture editor. Pat comes to us from Durham, N.C., where she was the editor of the fine journal *Southern Exposure*. Pat is a Chicago native who has spent the last 20 years in the South and is returning home to the Cubs.

We're both happy and sad to announce that we've lost our longtime art director, Peter Hannan, to Hollywood. Pete will be working with the Nickelodeon network to create *Catdog*, an animated TV series for children. We will miss Pete, who is a great person as well as a fine art director. Our new art director is Kit Boyce. He has worked with Pete as associate art director for the past two years.

IN THESE TIMES
 "...with liberty and justice for all"

Editor: James Weinstein
Executive Editor: Deidre McFadyen
Senior Editors: Joel Bleifuss, David Moberg,
 Salim Muwakkil
Culture Editor: Pat Arnow
Associate Editor: Dave Mulcahey
Contributing Editors: Patricia Aufderheide
 Linda DeLibero, Miles Harvey, Diana
 Johnstone, Pete Karman, Chris Lehmann,
 Fred Weir
Editorial Interns: Amanda Hiber,
 Gretchen Purser, Ana Vargas,
 Norman Wishner

Art Director: Kit Boyce
Assistant Art Director: Jim Rinnert
Illustrators: Sheila Flinchbaugh,
 Terry LaBan

Publisher: James Weinstein
Associate Publisher: Beth Schulman
Assistant Publisher: Claudia Morris

Business Manager: Robert Larson
Circulation Director: Jake Blankenship
Advertising Director: Patricia Gray

In These Times (ISSN 0160-5992) is published biweekly by the Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. Subscriptions are \$36.95 a year (\$59 for institutions; \$61.95 Canada; \$75.95 overseas). Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 308 E. Hitt St., Mt. Morris, IL 61054. This issue (Vol. 21, No. 16) published June 30, 1997, for newsstand sales June 30-July 13, 1997. (773) 772-0100. Member: Alternative Press Syndicate. The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright ©1997 by the Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Copies of *In These Times* contract with the National Writers Union are available upon request. Complete issues and volumes of *In These Times* are available from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, MI. All rights reserved. *In These Times* is indexed in both the Alternative Press Index and the Left Index. Publisher does not assume liability for unsolicited manuscripts or material. Manuscripts or material unaccompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope will not be returned. All correspondence should be sent to: *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. E-mail: itt@ipc.apc.org. For customer service and to place subscription orders, call toll free: (800) 827-0270. Advertising rates sent on request. Available back issues are \$5 each; specify volume and number. All letters received by *In These Times* become property of the newspaper. We reserve the right to print letters in condensed form.



COVER ©1997 KIT BOYCE

InTHESETIMES

CONTENTS

Volume 21, Number 16



A flawed peace
*The structure of the Middle East
 accords doomed the peace process.*

RASHID KHALIDI

14

The reform racket
*U.S. development aid helped a
 tiny clique help themselves to
 Russia's national treasury:*

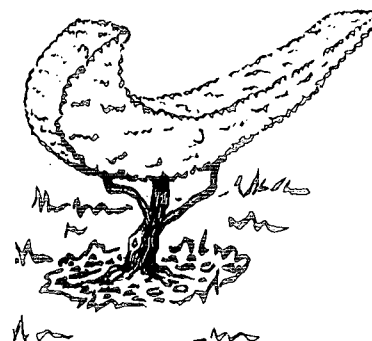
FRED WEIR AND DOROTHY ROSENBERG

18

Seedy business
*Private money is rescuing
 beleaguered public parks—but
 only where the rich live.*

NEIL DEMAUSE

25



FEATURES

- The First Stone: The Fairness Agenda** • Joel Bleifuss12
Does America owe blacks reparations? • Salim Muwakkil.....22
In the End: Ken Kesey back on the bus • Thomas Frank40

REVIEWS

- In Print: Movies as Politics** • Lawrence Levi29
Bridging the Class Divide • David Dyssegaard Kallick32
Speed Read: Lovely Me: The Life of Jacqueline Susann • Barbara Garson ..36

DEPARTMENTS

- Letters**4
Sylvia • Nicole Hollander4
In Short6
Appall-O-Meter7
The Big Picture • Kit Boyce8
Huge Mouth • Peter Hannan.....11

LETTERS

Fishy facts

In his article on the fishing industry ("Fishy business," May 14), Jeffrey St. Clair claims that the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) backed Tyson Foods in a fish factory in China in 1994. This statement is inaccurate.

First of all, OPIC operations have been suspended in China since Congress closed our programs there due to human rights concerns following the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989. Furthermore, Tyson is not a current OPIC client and, to my knowledge, never has been.

It also is important to note that as a condition of OPIC support, all potential projects are analyzed for their environmental impacts and for their effects on the U.S. economy. If it is determined that a project will result in the loss of U.S. employment, OPIC does not support it. Actually, OPIC-backed projects are job and export creators.

Since 1971, OPIC has backed \$107 billion worth of investments that will generate \$52.8 billion in U.S. exports and create more than 225,000 American jobs.

OPIC is a self-sustaining U.S. government agency that sells investment services to American businesses of all sizes investing in the world's emerging markets and developing nations. OPIC programs support American foreign policy, strengthen the U.S. economy by creating jobs and exports, and operate at no cost to the American taxpayer.

Mildred O. Callear
Acting President and CEO
Overseas Private Investment Corp.
Washington, D.C.

Jeffrey St. Clair responds: The trail of Don Tyson's complicated and lucrative arrangements with the Clinton administration eventually leads back to the mansion that Ron Brown built—the Commerce Department. Nixon may have opened the door to China,

but it took Brown's deals with the Butchers of Beijing to make China a profit-ground for U.S. corporations. However, China's cheap labor pools and nonexistent environmental standards are offset by the unpredictability of the political regime. To entice jittery companies into unstable regions, Brown began doling out government-backed loans and insurance policies. Generally, these inducements are handled by OPIC, an unsavory offshoot of the Commerce Department that subsidizes the export of American jobs. In the case of Arctic-Alaska, however, it appears (contrary to what I was told by Commerce Department officials) that the blood is solely on the hands of Commerce, not OPIC—thanks largely to the vigilance of Jesse Helms.

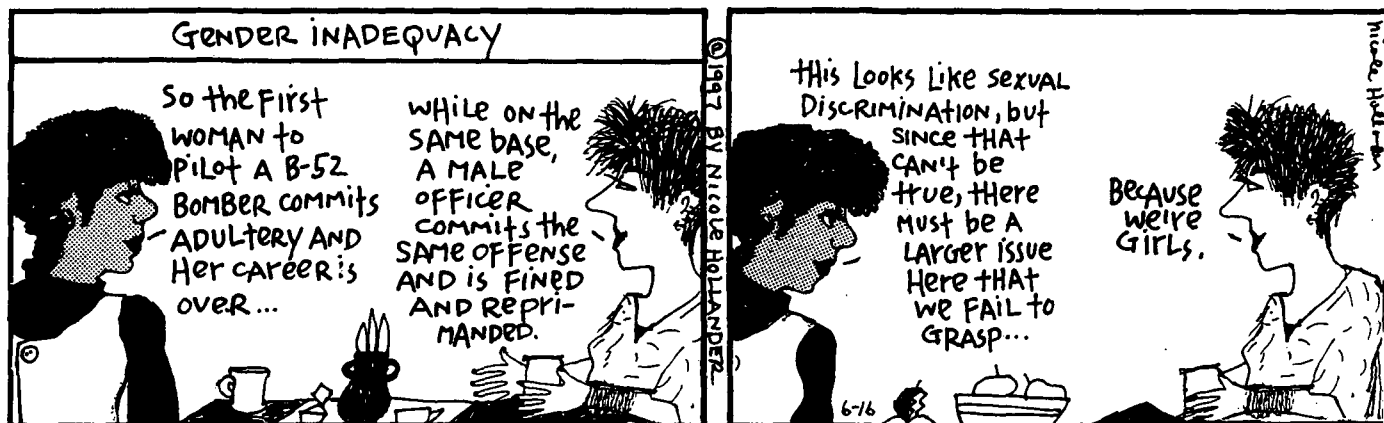
OPIC's assurances about the environmental purity of its projects are laughable. Take Indonesia, where OPIC finds itself at the center of the DNC money scandals. In this genocidal regime, OPIC has generously subsidized the construction of massive coal-fired power plants operated by Mission Energy (AKA Southern California Edison), the Entergy Corp. and the Lippo Group.

Food and agriculture

In These Times is an important source of news and analysis for me. Thus it was disheartening to see a misstatement in Joel Bleifuss' article, "This

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



mad pig went to market" (May 26). The article is interesting and informative, but it is mistaken in saying that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The FDA is part of the Public Health Service, which is in the Department of Health and Human Services. As a result, food regulation is fragmented between both departments. This arrangement contributes mightily to the difficulty in establishing a consistent food-safety policy.

Rima D. Apple
Professor of Human Ecology
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wis.

Insightful

I cannot tell you how relieved I am to have your magazine in existence on the political and media landscape. I have spent years hopefully purchasing single issues of the torrid gamut of left publications and, upon reading them, tossing them down in disappointment, disheartened and disgusted.

Party organs trumpet the imminent overthrow of capitalism, "mass mobilizations" and "things worse than ever" year in and year out. Newsletters from left NGOs operate on the editorial dictum to gather the maximum amount of disassociated facts about the badness of everything (whether it be in the environment, in international politics or in race relations) and land-fill them onto the page. Turgid academic magazines-cum-dissertations are clotted with abstruse Ph.D.-speak and citations of arcane theorists they assume the reader is intimately familiar with.

More secular radical mags wave bloody banners while rejecting critical analysis, or forget to copy edit, or please themselves (and thus alienate the broader public and working class) by flailing their readers with hyperbolic and monolithic statements about

any belief (or person) outside their own particular hermetically sealed subculture of righteousness. The most amazing thing to me is that 10 years ago, I counted *ITT* as an example of this lot.

I don't know what happened, but I thank you. The magazine is readable, funny, self-critical and insightful. This last characteristic I particularly appreciate because learning something new leavens the often bad news, and gives me ways to deal with the problem.

Andy Couturier
San Francisco

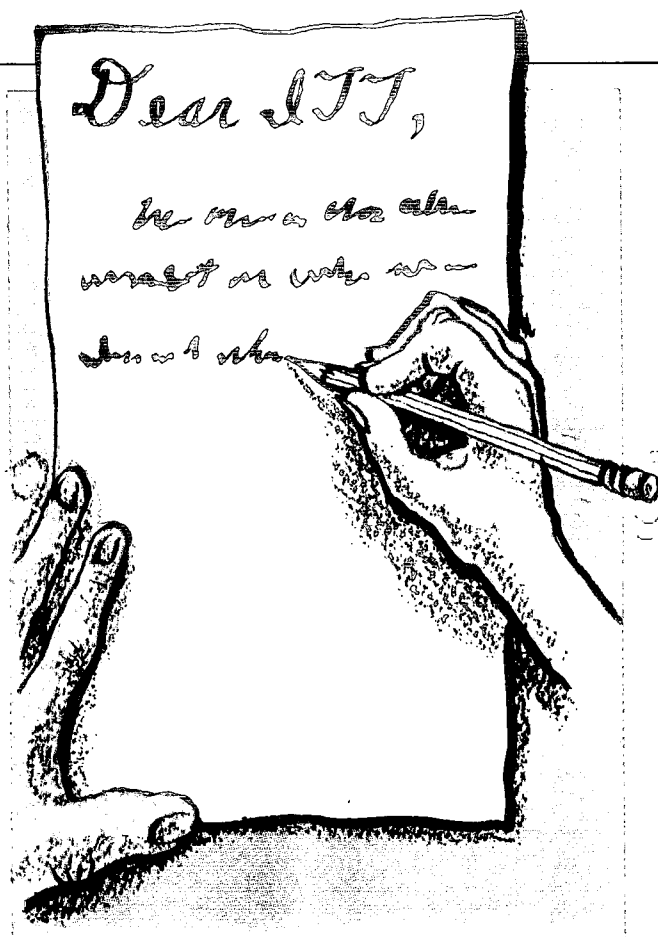
Cold War legacy

Two different articles in the April 28 issue touched on the same bit of Cold War history. Martin A. Lee, in "The cop, the gangster and the beauty queen," described the "stay-behind" squads that were set up early on in NATO countries. Peter Kornbluh, in "Who will run the CIA?," wrote of

sights on domestic targets," as Lee reports. The 1967 coup in Greece, said to be a NATO contingency plan code-named Prometheus, seems to have been one such case, although the "generals' coup" planned by some U.S. officials was pre-empted by colonels who pulled off a coup-within-the-coup.

Little or nothing was publicly known of the NATO/CIA stay-behind operations until the group in Italy, known as "Gladio," was exposed in 1990. The scandal led to the elimination of most groups still in existence. However, as Lee indicates, the group in Turkey seems to be an exception.

A. Rice
Washington, D.C.



Truman's creation of the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC) to counter the Soviet Union's covert actions with covert actions of our own, such as propaganda, economic warfare, preventive direct action, subversion against hostile states and support of anti-communist indigenous elements in "free" countries. Funding for these operations came initially from the 5 percent European counterpart funds under the Marshall Plan.

One of the OPC's first tasks was to set up the stay-behinds in NATO countries to carry out such operations in the event of a Soviet invasion. When it became evident that the Soviets would not invade, some of these groups "set their

Correction: The June 16 editorial, "The military budget boondoggle," incorrectly stated that the House Progressive Caucus has 109 members. In fact, it has 58 members.

InSHORT



The French left rises again

Has the French left, soundly defeated four years ago, come back from the dead? After their unexpected but decisive victory in France's June 1 legislative elections, the Socialist Party and its coalition partners, including the Communist Party and the Greens, formed a government under the leadership of Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin and settled down to the difficult business of governing.

The French stock market took a brief dip when the results were announced, and European financial markets are reportedly uneasy in the wake of the left victory. Jospin has hinted that his government will suspend the planned privatizations of several large nationalized corporations, such as France Télécom and Air France. The Socialists are firm supporters

of the common European currency, but they are expected to loosen the strict fiscal criteria applied to the countries seeking to adopt it.

Although no one is expecting radical changes, the left's supporters are hoping that a few decisive measures by the government at the outset will set a more progressive tone. It is widely expected—though not yet confirmed—that the government will suspend the closing of a Renault automobile plant in the Belgian town of Vilvoorde. The Renault Auto Works, in which the French state holds a controlling share, announced in early March that the plant's 3,000 workers would be laid off, provoking vigorous resistance and displays of solidarity between French and Belgian workers. The new government is also expected to repeal repressive anti-immigrant laws passed in 1993 under conservative Interior Minister Charles Pasqua.

President Jacques Chirac called parliamentary elections almost a year ahead of schedule, hoping to shore up plummeting support for the government of Alain Juppé and thus pave the way for new austerity measures. The tactic backfired spectacularly. The left won 315 seats out of 577, including 245 for the Socialist Party, 39 for the Communists, seven for the Greens (their first seats ever) and 24 for other left-of-center candidates.

The right lost more than 200 of its 477 seats. Nearly all of these belong to the conservative Union for French Democracy and the neo-Gaullist Rally for the Republic,

which formed the coalition government under Juppé. The racist National Front, however, did manage one victory, in the Mediterranean coastal city of Toulon, already a bastion of far-right strength. A desperate battle for succession has begun at the head of the two major conservative parties, which were severely destabilized by their defeat.

It may look as though French politics is a quirky game, veering from one extreme to the other every few years. In fact, the concerns expressed by voters have been quite consistent: Unemployment, security and the erosion of welfare-state benefits are at the top of most people's list of worries. It was essentially the Juppé government's overt insensitivity to these concerns that gave the left another chance to govern.

© 1997 KIT BOYCE

Jospin will have to "cohabit" with a president of the opposite camp—the third such experience since 1986, although this is the first time it has involved a left-wing parliament and a conservative president. Chirac will probably let the left govern as it sees fits in the domestic area while continuing to exercise strong prerogatives in foreign policy.

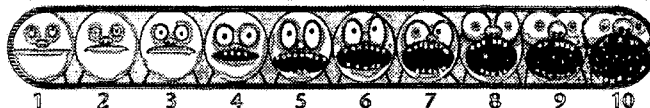
The new government reflects a new diversity on the French left. It includes two Communist ministers, one Green and one dissident Socialist. It features eight women out of 24, including three in top-ranking positions.

Leaders on the left are keenly aware that the new government cannot afford to disappoint its supporters, as the Socialists did several times in the '80s, because this time, the consequences could be disastrous. The National Front, with its 15 percent support nationally, could begin to make even more serious inroads in French institutions if voters' concerns are not met with decisive action.

—James Cohen

APPALL-O-METER

THE IN THESE TIMES INDEX OF INDECENCIES



By David Futrelle

Labored explanation 6.2

Facts, shmacts. The press has hailed Robert Reich's memoir of his time in the Clinton administration, *Locked in the Cabinet*, as a lively account of Washington power-brokering. Now it appears that Reich simply made up some of his most engaging stories. An article in the online magazine *Slate* alleges that some of Reich's dramatic tales from the front were, shall we say, a little embellished. It's not simply a matter of "differing recollections" of private meetings, *Slate* contends: "Some of Reich's dialogues are checkable, and turn out, when checked, to be inaccurate in ways that serve Reich's rhetorical ends." Reich claims he had no obligation to check his recollections of public hearings and the like with the actual transcripts, and that, in any case, "the differences don't seem terribly relevant to me. I was recording my experience as I experienced it." Reich, who's about three feet tall, was Clinton's secretary of commerce, or something like that. He was forced to resign and wrote *Locked in the Cupboard* after press reports exposed his torrid trysts with Kathie Lee Gifford in a back room of one of her sweatshops. That's more or less how it happened, we're pretty sure.



The little red workhouse 6.1

Schools falling apart? Don't raise taxes. After all, there's a great untapped resource sitting right there in the school, wasting who knows how much valuable time plowing through old textbooks, passing notes and chewing gum. That's right. Instead of waiting for a government handout, all those lazy students could be making their education pay for itself. Faced with severe shortages of money and supplies, the Barnstable Grade Five School on Cape Cod is showing the way. As *The Associated Press* recently reported, the school put its students to work during recess and after school designing and selling a board game, and netted \$30,000 in only a month. The success of this venture has inspired Barnstable principal Tom McDonald to dream of more ambitious business opportunities. "Really, we're in a time right now where the tax base is such that schools have to find ways to take care of their own needs," McDonald said. "Our ultimate goal is to fund our own school."

Guidance system 9.3

Not exactly what is meant by safe sex: Four students at a Queens high school have been accused of gang-raping a 14-year-old girl in an unused classroom—after two of them went to a school guidance counselor to get condoms to use in the attack, the *New York Times* reports. "All of them were popular," a classmate said of the arrested students. "That's why it was a shock."

© 1997 TERRY LABAN

Canada's comeback kids

Von Godin makes an unlikely giant-killer. As a longtime labor organizer in Canada's depressed East Coast mining industry, he's used to being on the outside looking in.

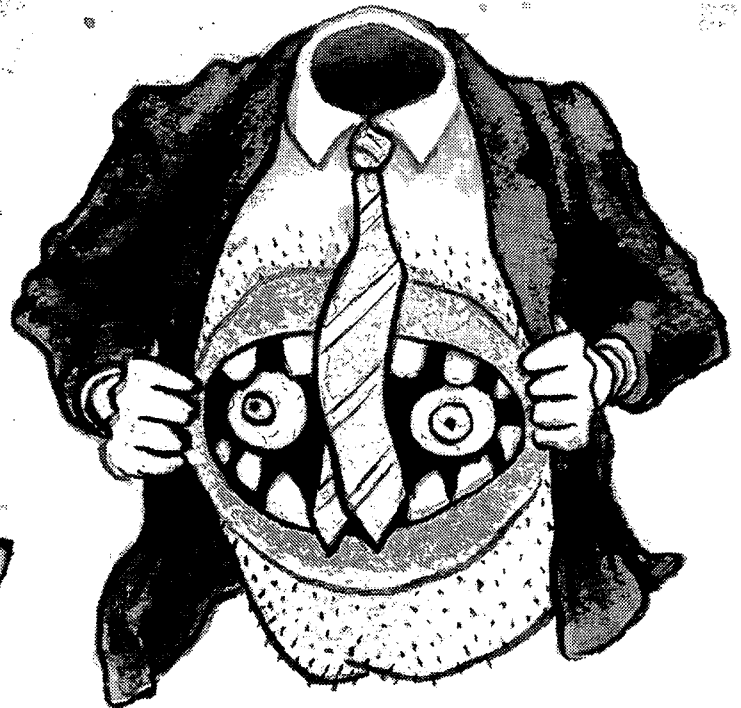
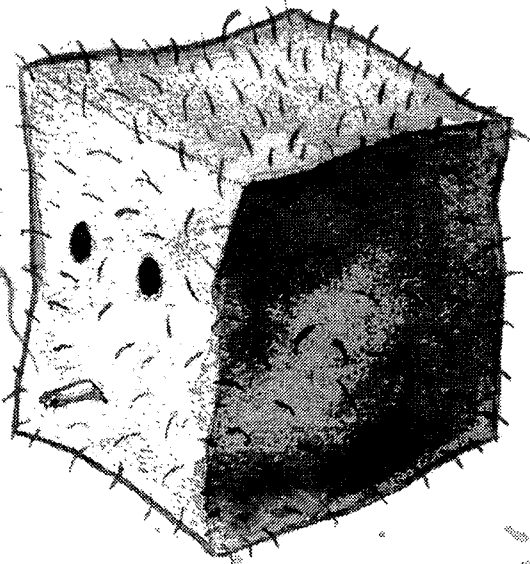
That changed on June 2 when Canada's left-wing New Democratic Party staged a stunning comeback in the country's federal elections. Now Godin and 20 other victorious NDP candidates are dusting off their suits and heading to parliament.

"It was shocking," says Godin, who will represent the Acadie-Bathurst constituency in Nova Scotia. "Everybody was telling me I'd come in second—if I was lucky."

The federal NDP has long served as the social conscience of Canada, having fought for the creation of the welfare state—and, these days, fighting to preserve it. At the peak of its popularity in the late '80s, the party held 43 of Canada's 295 federal seats. But that strength was destroyed in the neoconservative '90s, when the NDP shrank to a mere nine seats in the 1993 election—provoking hand-wringing about the "death of the left."

In June, it was payback time. Not only did the NDP win 21 seats, but it completely dominated the maritime provinces—the most economically depressed part of Canada. What's more, the party defeated two prominent members of the reigning Liberal cabinet. Godin himself became instantly famous by defeating Doug Young, the Liberal Party's tough-talking minister of defense. For Godin, the victory over Young was delicious poetic justice. Only months earlier, Young had casually dismissed Godin as a "professional agitator."

Continued on page 9



MASKS

Continued from page 7

It was an odd election campaign, if only because the NDP took an unusual risk. It surprised its supporters by acknowledging that it didn't have a hope in hell of winning—given that the governing Liberals, who talk left and lean right, still had a high approval rating. Instead, the NDP tried a new tack: The party campaigned solely to be a vocal opposition that would fight primarily to preserve the health care program and to create jobs.

"We know we aren't going to take the election," NDP leader Alexa McDonough told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. "But we're going to get our members in to shake up Ottawa and wake up the Liberals." Some NDP supporters called the position defeatist; others called it realistic.

Throughout the election, the NDP was almost entirely ignored by the press, who fixated on the issue of Quebec's possible separation, even though poll after poll showed that Canadians were mostly concerned about the country's dismal and unbudging 10 percent unemployment rate.

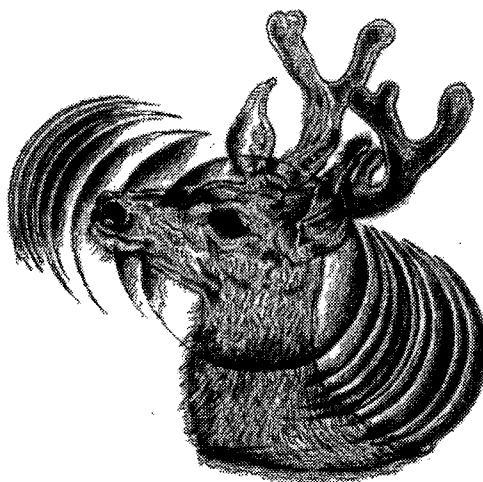
But the NDP's message evidently got through. Now, NDP supporters are walking around with grins on their faces, since they're the only ones who managed to achieve their electoral goals. The Liberals lost several seats, botching their early lead in the polls as the incumbent government. The rabidly right-wing Reform Party, which dominates the Canadian West, failed in its attempt to spread eastwards across Canada. The Quebec separatist party, the Bloc Québécois, lost several seats. The Progressive Conservatives, demolished in the last election after running the country for nine years in the '80s, won fewer seats than the NDP.

Is this the beginning of an even bigger comeback for the Canadian left? It's hard to say. Godin knows that he and his peers have their work cut out for them. "We've got to keep up the momentum," he says. "This is just a good start."

—Clive Thompson

Mad for Bambi

ACCORDING TO A COLORADO DIVISION OF WILDLIFE SURVEY OF mule deer brains, about 6 percent of bucks killed by hunters last fall in Colorado suffered chronic wasting disease (CWD), a malady similar to mad cow disease. According to the Division of Wildlife press release,



"There is no evidence that humans coming in contact with CWD will be affected." Or will not be affected, one might add, since no studies have been done. It is known that all transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, including CWD, mad cow disease and the human variant, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, can be spread from one mammalian species to another. With that in

mind, the Division of Wildlife warns hunters that "they should not eat the meat of animals showing signs of the disease." Of course, deer carrying the disease appear healthy until shortly before death, making it impossible without the aid of a microscope to tell whether a deer suffers from the disease or not. —Joel Bleifuss

Intel insiders

You certainly wouldn't expect to have problems downloading Web sites at Intel's corporate "campuses" around the world. After all, this is the company that recently unveiled the Pentium II processor, one of the fastest microchips on earth. But try calling up www.igc.apc.org/faceintel through Intel's network and your computer is likely to bark back "abort, retry, fail."

That's because Intel officials have electronically roped off the Web address to employees using the company's network. And no wonder—it's the home page of a group of dissident Intel employees and ex-employees who have an ax to grind with the computer chip maker.

Elegant and easy to navigate, the home page contains a running log of grievances and other unflattering information

The jet-set cabinet

BETWEEN JANUARY 1, 1995, AND NOVEMBER 6, 1996, PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON INVITED 477 friends and supporters to fly with him on Air Force One. According to the White House, of these guests, 56 were major contributors—that is, either personally or through affiliated organizations, they gave at least \$5,000 to the Democratic National Committee or raised at least \$25,000 for the Clinton-Gore campaign. A breakdown of these big donors by profession says something about presidential priorities. The high fliers included 22 corporate executives, 12 lawyers, eight politicians, eight labor leaders, four investment executives, one urologist and one liberal activist. —J.B.



American exceptionalism

A PEW RESEARCH CENTER SURVEY CONDUCTED IN MAY FOUND THAT 80 percent of Americans can identify Dennis Rodman, the basketball star who found fame in hair dye and cross-dressing, and 62 percent are familiar with Ellen DeGeneres, lesbian sitcom phenom. On the other hand, only 15 percent of Americans have any idea that Trent Lott is the Senate Majority Leader, and a mere 10 percent can identify Tony Blair as the prime minister of Britain. All of which says more about the people who manage America's media and schools than it does about the ignorance of the American people. —J.B.

mately denied by the California workers' compensation board last year.) About a year ago, after meeting another disgruntled former Intel employee, Hamidi founded Former and Current Employees at Intel—known as FACE Intel, for short. The California-based group has 14 core members and about 150 less active supporters, he says.

The group's home page accuses Intel of intimidating workers with abusive disciplinary actions and of discriminating on the basis of age, race, gender and medical disability.

Intel officials deny FACE's charges and say they blocked the Web site because its information is inaccurate. "In our view, it's defamatory," says Intel spokeswoman Tracy Koon. "We have a right to control how our computer system is used, and we chose not to use it for this small group of people."

After being dropped by two Internet service providers (whom Hamidi suspects were pressured by Intel to steer clear of FACE), the group hooked up with the Communications Workers of America (CWA), which has its own Internet service. Intel employees can now get to the FACE Web site through the CWA site (www.cwa-union.org), which Intel can't block.

The CWA, which has long sought a foothold in the staunchly anti-union Silicon Valley, was delighted to help. The union invited Hamidi to an international technology workers' conference in Washington, D.C., to speak about organizing within the U.S. high-tech industry. "We are incredibly interested in the way he has been organizing online," says union spokeswoman Candice Johnson.

As the electronic revolt at Intel points out, information technology may prove to be a valuable tool for labor organizing. Unions can get their message to every worker who can go online, and even the captains of digital industry can't stop them

—Josh Feit

about Intel. Click on "Is Intel a Great Place to Work?" and you see a chart of company ratings from the California Public Employees Retirement System, a powerful and progressive institutional investor, which gives Intel a grade of "D." There's also a ranking of good employers from *Working Mother* magazine that includes high-tech titans like Microsoft and Tektronix but excludes Intel. Other topics you can select for more information include "Labor Lawsuits at Intel" and "Examples of Discrimination at Intel." Since going online in March, the Web site has logged more than 100,000 visits.

The agent provocateur behind the Web site is Ken Hamidi, who worked as an Intel engineer in California for nine years. He was fired in 1995 in a dispute about medical disability benefits. (His medical disability claim was ulti-

Punitive tort reform

Remember the woman who was awarded \$2.9 million in punitive damages by a jury after she was scalded by a cup of hot coffee from McDonald's? That infamous case spawned quite a few jokes and helped persuade a growing number of Americans that the U.S. court system and millionaire trial lawyers were "out of control" and in need of reform.

What's not so funny is that this and a few other well-publicized "outrageous" jury awards have created a political climate that is making it easier for corporations, insur-

ance companies and others to gain the support they need to win passage of so-called "tort-reform" legislation at both the state and federal levels of government. Tort-reform laws—which severely limit the amount of money a jury can award in punitive damages—have already been enacted in 31 states, and legislation is pending in a few others.

Congress is currently considering a bill introduced by Sen. John Ashcroft (R-MO) that would cap punitive-damage awards at \$250,000 and make it harder for injured parties in all 50 states to hold manufacturers liable for damages after a certain period of time. (Tort reform was one of the 10 planks in Newt Gingrich's "Contract with America.") Last year, Congress passed a similar bill, but President Clinton vetoed it, arguing that it was too extreme and "tilted the field against consumers." Republicans and other critics crowed that Clinton was simply caving in to the wishes of trial lawyers, his top campaign contributors. With the election over, supporters of Ashcroft's bill are hoping that the president will now be more willing to compromise. At a recent press conference, White House spokesman Mike McCurry told reporters that the president "would like to see ... legitimate tort reform occur." Just what Clinton would accept in a compromise bill, however, is still not clear.

Consumer advocates vehemently oppose any legislation that limits a victim's right to compensation or his or her right to hold negligent parties financially responsible for the harm they inflict. They also reject industry claims that lawyers seeking unjustified punitive-damage awards are bogging down U.S. courts. At an April 10 hearing on product liability before the House Committee on the Judiciary, Joan Claybrook, president of the consumer-rights group Public Citizen, cited studies indicating that product-liability cases represent only 3 percent of all civil trials.

Still, many companies and industry groups see tort reform as an effective way to protect themselves from potentially costly and "frivolous" lawsuits. CEOs from Tenneco, B.F. Goodrich, Caterpillar, DuPont and General Motors have been among the lobbyists twisting arms in Washington to pass tort-reform legislation over the past few years. Tobacco companies in particular have been pressing hard and spending millions to promote legislation that would drastically limit their financial liability in the face of growing evidence that they have known for years that their products kill.

Ironically, in their quest to pass

federal tort-reform legislation, Republicans (and some Democrats) are calling for federal standards at a time when they have been promoting the "devolution" of power from the federal government to the states. As opponents argue, if Congress caps punitive damages, local juries and courts would be denied the right to determine what they think is adequate punishment for negligent and harmful behavior. Typically, "outrageous" or unmerited damage awards are appealed and often reduced to a fraction of the original headline-grabbing amount (the McDonald's award was later reduced to \$640,000). If corporations are allowed to restructure the U.S. court system, citizens will lose the power to hold these powerful interests responsible when they harm individuals and communities.

—Ron Bigler

Contributors

James Cohen teaches political science at the University of Paris-VIII (Saint-Denis) and the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris.

Clive Thompson is a features editor at *Shift* magazine in Toronto.

Josh Felt is a business reporter at *Willamette Week* in Portland, Ore., where a version of this story first appeared.

Ron Bigler is a freelance writer based in New York City.

THE ADVENTURES OF A HUGE MOUTH

By Peter Hannan



THE FIRST STONE

A PROGRESSIVE AGENDA

By Joel Bleifuss

Slowly and methodically, the nation's leading public-interest groups and members of the House Progressive Caucus are drawing up their own version of the Republicans' Contract with America.

As plans now stand, sometime in September, the 58 members of the Progressive Caucus will gather on the steps of the Capitol with other interested congressional Democrats and the leaders of 100 progressive citizen groups to sign "The Fairness Agenda for America." Those involved will pledge to promote public debate on fairness issues and test-market the agenda to voters in 1998.

The collaboration was kicked off in January under the banner of the Progressive Challenge. (See "The First Stone," February 3.) John Cavanagh, co-director of the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) and one of the initiators of the challenge, says he is pleased so far with the support that citizen organizations have lent the project. "A lot of groups that usually focus on short-term legislative battles have shown enormous willingness to take a step back and spend part of their energy on this collaborative effort," he says. "It's still more diffuse than we would like, but when you think that we are five months into it, it is not bad."

Or, as Bill Goold, an aide to Rep. Bernie Sanders (I-VT), told those gathered for a June 5 strategy meeting: "In terms of child development, we have gone from infancy to toddlerhood."

The Progressive Challenge hopes to develop a common progressive strategy that would unify citizen groups and progressive members of Congress—something that the right has done very successfully with conservative groups and legislators. "It is crucial—and possible—for progressives to develop their own vision and coherence as the New Right has done, and to do it in a way that is dramatically more democratic," says Allen Hunter, a founder of the Progressive Media Project in Madison, Wisc., who has studied the ascent of the New Right.

As a Progressive Challenge memo explains, unlike the Contract with America, the Fairness Agenda is not "a top-down, poll-defined gimmick" by legislators to enact specific legislation. Instead, it is a "bottom-up, principles-driven process of creating a vibrant national debate that involves both Congress and civil society."

In its draft form, the Fairness Agenda for America begins with this statement of principle:

Democracy is under attack in the United States as rising poverty, racism, sexism, homelessness, environmental degradation, and the declining quality and security of work drive a deep wedge between the haves and have-nots here and abroad. Republicans, even those who acknowledge some of

these problems, place the blame on "big" government, the poor, immigrants, and gays and lesbians. They are wrong. Rather, the increasing tension, anxiety and inequity in our society are rooted in the growing control by a small number of unaccountable global corporations over our economy and political process. Their agenda and influence has skewed the federal budget to overspend on defense and "corporate welfare" and to underspend on meeting basic health, education and human needs.

The Fairness Agenda, reviving President Franklin Roosevelt's 1944 "Economic Bill of Rights," goes on to delineate an eight-point program that calls on Congress to do the following:

- enact a "fairness budget" for America
- ensure jobs and worker rights for all
- promote a just and sustainable global economy
- fight for civil rights and wage equity for all, regardless of race, gender or sexual preference
- promote a foreign policy that includes demilitarization, human rights and a "new internationalism"
- fight for sustainable communities and environmental justice
- make social investment a priority
- get money out of politics

Over the summer, working groups of congressional staffers and leaders of public interest groups will refine the agenda and put together a comprehensive guidebook on each item, both to provide citizens more information and to outline legislative solutions.

"We hope that a year from now, each working group will have a central piece of legislation that they are pushing," says Cavanagh. He points out that this year Progressive Caucus members introduced about 100 separate pieces of legislation. With more coordination, he says, that number might have been reduced to 50.

The full-employment working group will be promoting

the Job Creation and Invest in America Act of 1997. This bill, which will be introduced by Rep. Major Owens (D-NY), aims to create several million new jobs to rebuild the nation's decaying infrastructure and provide critical human services in areas of high unemployment.

The group has already gotten behind the Living Wage Jobs for All Act. Ying Lee, a senior legislative assistant to Rep. Ron Dellums (D-CA), describes the bill, which Dellums is sponsoring, as an "organizing tool." "We realize that in order to turn legislation around we can't be responding to the Republican agenda; we have to have our own agenda—a vision, if you will—which doesn't exist right now," Lee says. "We want people to understand that there can be a different America."

Once the Fairness Agenda is unveiled, coalition members plan to conduct a training conference for progressive candidates. Chris Riddiough, the political director of the Democratic Socialists of America, in consultation with leaders from other groups, is currently scouting out congressional districts where candidates who campaign on Fairness Agenda issues might reasonably win. As Riddiough explained in a report to the Progressive Challenge meeting, "In the long term, we [at the Progressive Challenge] hope to develop a plan to aid progressive candidates in a large number of districts. But in looking towards 1998 as a test case, we plan to focus on a smaller number of races (10-15) for recruiting and training progressive candidates."

Organizationally, the Fairness Agenda coalition is still in flux. "There was talk that we should form a new organization," says Karen Dolan, the IPS-based coordinator of the Progressive Challenge. "But people are skeptical. We are working well as a collaboration. It is a coalition of all kinds of different groups with different strengths and different memberships. We hope that with this document we can bring more groups into the coalition."

Each group in the coalition will be as politically involved as its tax status permits. Some C-4 nonprofits will work in the electoral arena. The C-3s, which are prohibited from overt political activity, will provide educational material. And the large membership groups, such as the National Organization for Women and Americans for Democratic Action, will take the Fairness Agenda out on the road to raise awareness and support from their members.

"Ultimately, we will get change in Congress by building pressure from a strong grass-roots movement," Cavanagh says. "We see our job as building a movement around this agenda."

On the House side of the equation, about a third of the Progressive Caucus members have been personally involved. The day-to-day work on the initiative is being done by staffers from 10 Progressive Caucus member offices, with

people from about another 20 offices involved to a lesser extent. The overall effort is coordinated by Goold, working out of Sanders' Capitol Hill office.

Progressive Caucus members find themselves torn between planning for the future and dealing with the current threat from the Gingrich-Clinton budget deal. "The progressives in Congress have to get organized and use guerrilla tactics on the floor to upset the Republican agenda," says Goold, referring to such strategies as requiring roll-call votes for parliamentary motions. "But before they can start acting proactively, they first have to stop more bad from happening, like developing a strategy on the House floor to derail the tax and reconciliation bills. The tax bill will destroy the federal revenue base for 10 years and beyond. If those things are enacted, the mountain will be much higher to climb for any sort of progressive policy for decades to come."

Overshadowing any political plans for the future is the reality that congressional staffers don't have enough time to put a coordinated response together. Goold believes that progressive organizations must examine the paltry level of support they provide progressive members of Congress.

So far the Progressive Challenge has failed to attract financial support from foundations or individuals. Right-wing funders have a much better understanding of how politics works and the need to create a political infrastructure.

"If we can't beat the right, let's at least imitate them," Goold argues. He proposes that public-interest organizations and progressive funders establish congressional fellowships. Such programs, which provide scholars and activists with a year's employment in a Congress member's office, have been successfully used by both the Republican right and centrist Democrats. "I can't believe that there aren't progressives with deep pockets willing to invest in fellowships to place at least 10 or 15 progressive scholars and activists inside the Congress to do Progressive Caucus staff work a year at a time," Goold says.

This issue came to a head when Gingrich and the Republicans cut funding for caucus staff, thereby making collaborative efforts involving congressional liberals more difficult. Conservative Democrats have been able to bridge the gap with institutional support from the Democratic Leadership Council, which runs a huge think tank and lobbying operation. "There is no counterpart to the Democratic Leadership Council for progressives," Goold says. "And that has got to change. We just don't have the wherewithal even to engage the opposition in the clash of ideas. If we can't get information out to our members and allies, those ideas aren't going to go very far."

For more information about the Progressive Challenge, contact IPS at (202) 234-9382, ext. 228.



MIDDLE EAST

A flawed peace

The current crisis instigated by the Netanyahu government has revealed the gaping flaws in the structure of the peace accords.

By Rashid Khalidi

According to conventional wisdom, the current impasse in the Middle East is no more than an unfortunate disruption in the inexorable movement of the region towards peace. Depending on which conventional point of view is taken, blame is easily apportioned. The disruption is either entirely the fault of the extremist Palestinians, who have reverted to their regrettable propensity for terrorism (a view popular in Washington, in some sectors of the U.S. media and among a faction of Israelis), or it is the fault of the extremist Netanyahu government (the view of virtually everybody else in the world who pays attention to these matters).

But neither view disputes the central assumption that the peace process would be on track but for the villainy or obduracy of one side or the other. The reality, sadly, is far more complicated. The

current crisis in the Middle East has revealed the gaping, fatal flaws in the arrangements negotiated between the Palestinians and Israelis since 1991. Like the Titanic, this vessel was always supremely vulnerable, and like the ocean liner, a few gashes below the waterline have sent it rapidly to the bottom. The only difference between the two is that no one believes the Titanic can be salvaged.

As devised by Secretary of State James Baker and his assistants in 1991, the peace process called for agreement on interim accords concerning Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This period of interim self-rule was to last for five years. During that time, negotiations were to be completed on the more difficult final status issues such as Jerusalem, borders, sovereignty and refugees. Since these were the hardest issues on which to reach agreement, this seemed a sensible arrangement.

It is clear six years later, however, that what this arrangement really meant was that occupation of most of the West Bank, much of the Gaza Strip and all of East Jerusalem could continue indefinitely. Moreover, negotiations on the crucial final status issues have not yet begun and there is little prospect that they will in the foreseeable future. And even if they do, it's doubtful that they will be any more productive than the past six years of fruitless talks on interim accords. The Palestinians protested bitterly at the imposition on them alone of this extended negotiating framework. By contrast, the Arab states and Israel could simply negotiate final peace agreements, as Egypt already had and Jordan rapidly did.

The accords allowed Israel to refrain indefinitely from making any concessions to the Palestinians that it was not inclined to make. Thus, at the outset of the process in 1991, the Shamir government refused to recognize or deal with the PLO, the only entity able to speak for the Palestinians. After Shamir fell from power in June 1992, the Labor government under Yitzhak Rabin took some steps forward, but it too took advantage of the lax structure of the accords. Not wanting to decide which settlements to relinquish to Palestinian jurisdiction, Rabin manipulated things so that the issue of settlements (originally meant to be dealt with as part of the interim agreements) was deferred until the final status negotiations.

As a result, for the entire interim period, Israel was able to maintain complete control over the 144 Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as the vast areas of land and huge quantities of water that had been illegally appropriated for establishment of the settlements. During its four years in power, the Labor government built a network of roads connecting these settlements on expropriated Palestinian land and allowed the settler population to grow. It refrained, however, from authorizing the build-



©1997 KIT BOYCE

ing of any new settlements, major new housing projects in existing settlements or settlements in Jerusalem.

The accords did not provide any guarantee that the interim accords would be completed quickly, or that final status negotiations would begin soon thereafter. It is now clear that the idea of a five-year interim period was purely notional. Palestinian-Israeli negotiations have been going on directly and indirectly in a variety of forums for over six years, with no end in sight. The U.S. government has allowed the framework to bend and sag whenever it's convenient for Israel.

For instance, after all this time, the accords on Palestinian self-rule are still not complete. The Palestinian Authority, set up by the accords, controls less than 7 percent of the West Bank and barely 60 percent of the tiny Gaza Strip. The accords on self-rule may never be fully implemented. Israel has ignored deadlines, which it committed to in formal agreements signed at the White House in 1993 and 1995, for withdrawing its soldiers from the West Bank. Final status talks have yet to start and may never get under way.

Perhaps most disastrously, the accords left Israel free to take any actions it pleased with regard to sensitive issues like Jerusalem, which were supposed to be dealt with in the final status negotiations. This gaping loophole wasn't such a big

problem during the Labor government, but Netanyahu immediately seized upon it. Likud's recent actions in Jerusalem have exploded the illusion of a peace process. By opening an archaeological tunnel in the middle of the old Arab quarter of Jerusalem last December and beginning to build a new settlement at the southern edge of the city in March, the Netanyahu government essentially announced to the Palestinians, other Arabs and the rest of the world that it will change the status quo in Jerusalem and elsewhere in its favor until there is nothing left to negotiate in the final status talks.

The success of the peace accords, as structured, depends on the good will of the Israeli government. When in power, Labor did its best to mask the brutal reality of the concessions the Palestinians were forced to make in the interim accords. It did, however, seem willing to give up more land to placate the Palestinians. (We will never know since the accords had still largely not been implemented when Labor was swept from office in 1996.) But even had Labor won the election, the crunch would have come over the issues of Jerusalem and refugees. Labor showed no inclination to share sovereignty in Jerusalem with the Palestinians. Nor did it acknowledge the Israeli state's responsibility for—or offer to make restitution for—the dispossession of 750,000 Pales-

tinians when Israel was founded in 1948.

Netanyahu's election in June 1996 only made what would probably have been a bad situation rapidly worse. From the outset, his government was callous in its treatment of the Palestinians, reverting to the strident, propagandistic preaching of an anti-terrorist, anti-Palestinian jihad. With respect to the peace accords, the Likud government has reneged on many of the commitments made by its Labor predecessor. It has not withdrawn Israeli troops from most of the West Bank. It changed the status quo concerning the settlements and Jerusalem, even though Labor had promised not to until negotiations were completed. And Likud has not sat down with the Palestinians to discuss final status issues, even though talks were supposed to begin well over a year ago. The Netanyahu government only respects those elements of the accords that suit it. For example, it was happy to evacuate Israeli soldiers from the teeming cities and refugee camps of the Gaza Strip and the dangerous, crowded towns of the West Bank, and to hand over to the PLO the hazardous, thankless and largely futile task of repressing the angry young men in these areas.

Netanyahu's actions call into question its seriousness about negotiations, and even whether there is any point to negotiating with Israel at all. Everywhere else in the world, the media have prominently featured the fact that the crisis in the peace process has been caused by the Likud government's actions, particularly in Jerusalem, which are aimed at torpedoing the entire Oslo process. The U.S. media have in large measure kept this brutal reality from Americans, who have been told many things about what the Israeli government is up to, but rarely this.

The Netanyahu government's policies are also doing incalculable damage to the long-range possibility of Israeli-Arab reconciliation. The Arab countries have been closely watching Israel's treatment of the Palestinians, and gauging the prospects for accords on final status issues. They are particularly worried about what will happen with Jerusalem and the refugees. The Israeli government's disrespect for the Palestinians and the whole peace process has not been lost on these Arab states.

The Netanyahu government has put in jeopardy the valuable relations it has developed over decades with countries like Jordan, Egypt and Morocco. States like Qatar, Oman, Morocco and Tunisia, which have initiated diplomatic, trade, airline or tourism relations with Israel, are now having second thoughts. The Israeli government has completely ignored the valuable commercial possibilities that economic ties with the Arab world made possible, including the import of Egyptian and Qatari natural gas, tourism projects with Jordan, Egypt and Morocco, and regional electricity and gas grids with Jordan and Egypt. Finally, states like Syria and Lebanon, which have not yet signed peace treaties with Israel, are hardly likely to do so in the current climate.

Given the Netanyahu government's demonstration of its harsh disdain for Arab sensibilities, the Arab countries have

started to follow the angry lead of their domestic public opinion and openly criticize Israeli actions. At the extraordinary special session of the U.N. General Assembly in April to consider Israeli settlements in Jerusalem, the first in 15 years, the Arab states sponsored a resolution, adopted by a vote of 134 to 3, that condemned Israeli settlement construction in Jerusalem and reaffirmed that East Jerusalem is occupied territory. Participants at the Islamic Summit, which was held in Pakistan in March, endorsed the Palestinians' claim to Jerusalem as the capital of their state.

The United States bears responsibility for letting things deteriorate to this point. The Netanyahu government appears confident that it can continue to manipulate the Clinton team. So far nothing in the record of the Clinton administration in the Middle East indicates that this confidence is misplaced. The Israeli government appears equally confident that it can control or intimidate the leading institutions and major figures of the American Jewish community. So far, Israel has successfully muzzled the voice of the probable majority of American Jews who have profound doubts about Likud and Netanyahu.

But the Netanyahu government is playing with fire by moving so aggressively on the issue of Jerusalem. *The New Republic*, the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Times* have backed the Netanyahu government's massive U.S. propaganda campaign designed to prove that Jerusalem is not really important to Arabs and Muslims. In fact, Jerusalem is significant to them for religious, emotional and political reasons. The city has always been the focus of Palestinian national aspirations and, like Mecca and Medina, is sacred to Muslims.

A full and final Arab-Israeli normalization is inconceivable if Israel rejects any form of sharing the Holy City with the Palestinians. Netanyahu and others who do not believe that reconciliation is possible—or that normalization is desirable if it involves any concessions—would welcome such a stalemate. Sadly, this impasse comes at the expense of the Palestinians, who suffer the most from the continuation of the status quo, as well as the many Israelis who want reconciliation and would accept some concessions—even in Jerusalem—if these concessions brought real peace.

The Palestinians are resisting Israel's maneuvers, and many Israelis are vocally unhappy with their government's policy. But the United States has kept largely silent, continuing to provide more than \$8 billion annually to Israel (more than \$3 billion in foreign aid; some \$2 billion in loan guarantees; \$1 billion in tax-free charitable contributions; and \$2 billion in investment and tourism). The time to act is now, before it is too late. And the place to begin is Jerusalem. ◀

Rashid Khalidi is director of the Center for International Studies at the University of Chicago, and president of the American Committee on Jerusalem. His latest book is *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (Columbia University Press).

It could save your life! Has anyone ever died from salmonella or E. coli after eating their companion animal? But thousands of Americans die from toxic meat, poultry and eggs each year. And millions become seriously ill, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Because raising food animals in dark, squalid cages where they can't even turn around, lie down or breathe normally isn't just cruel and abusive. It's a recipe for lethal disease.

You'll be taking a stand against cruelty. Right up to the moment you slip your furry friend into a hot dog roll, he'll have led a pampered and happy life. No such luck for the eight billion farm animals consumed in the U.S each year! Their lives are a never ending nightmare. The millions who drop dead from stress are considered just a routine business expense.

You'll help save the environment. Factory farms destroy the environment. The dumping of millions of tons of animal waste and rotting body parts is poisoning once pristine waterways and underground water supplies. Putrid air is making entire communities uninhabitable.

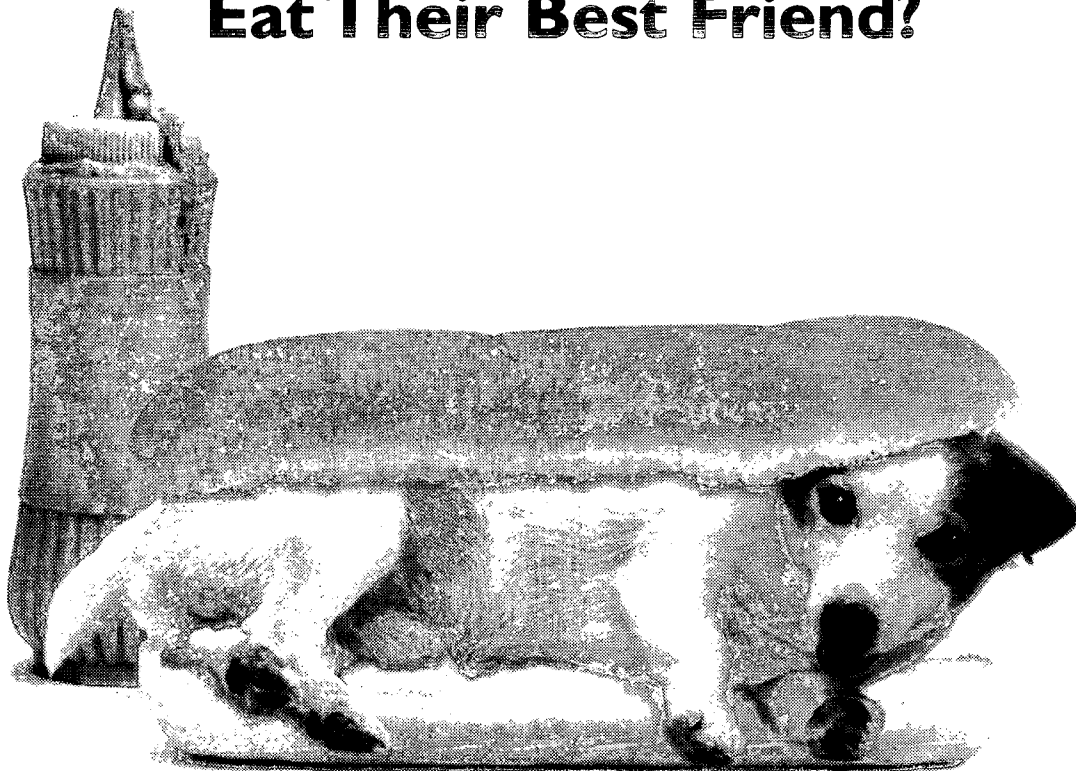
You'll help exploited workers. Eating Rover or Muffin won't leave you feeling that you contributed to the abuse of the human victims who cut up slaughtered animals. Many workers, particularly in the poultry industry, are crippled by having to cut up to 90 chickens a minute. When they can no longer work, they are discarded like worn out tires.

You'll help solve the dog and cat overpopulation problem. Unwanted dogs and cats are put to death by the millions. Until we can implement a

national spay/neuter program and stop the endless cycle of unwanted animals starving in the streets, why not just attack the problem with a hot skillet and a dash of garlic?

Finally, let's not allow anything as irrational as personal attachment to stand between us and a *real* hot dog. Loving and cuddling some animals while ignoring the suffering of others, who feel exactly the same pain, is what's *really* irrational. We are programmed from our first meals to pet some animals and eat others. But, a meatless diet can save your health, the environment and the lives of farm animals. Best of all, with your new non-violent diet you can keep cuddling your four legged friend while sending a powerful message to the meat industry's moguls of misery.

Why Would Anybody Eat Their Best Friend?



This ad was produced by the **COALITION FOR NONVIOLENT FOOD**, a project of **ANIMAL RIGHTS INT'L**,
P.O. Box 214, Planetarium Stn., New York, NY 10024, Henry Spira, Coordinator.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

R U S S I A

The reform racket

The abrupt termination in May of a \$57 million U.S. government contract with Harvard's Institute for International Development (HIID) and the firing of the two directors of the institute's Russian reform project hit the international aid community like a bombshell. A government investigation into charges that the two officials engaged in insider trading has begun to cast light into some of the darker corners of Russian economic reform.

U.S. development aid advanced the careers and political aspirations of a tiny clique of market reformers.

**By Fred Weir and
Dorothy Rosenberg**
MOSCOW

The mounting evidence suggests that the United States Agency for International Development (U.S. AID) gave HIID millions of taxpayer dollars to promote the careers and political goals of a tiny clique of Russian market reformers. Over the five years it promoted a simplistic free-market model for Russia, HIID provided the ideological rationale for a handful of new capitalist oligarchs to help themselves to the for-

mer Communist state's vast assets, concentrate political power at the top and short-circuit the rule of law. Not only was Russia's fledgling democracy undermined and progress toward an open-market economy thwarted, but the tangled web of cronyism, corruption and conflicts of interest appears to have ultimately ensnared Russia's American backers as well.

"In 40 years of HIID activities, this case is basically unparalleled," said Jeffrey Sachs, the institute's director, after firing the two men. Sachs, a Latin America specialist who himself served as one of post-Soviet Russia's first economic advisers, has plenty to worry about. Trading on Harvard's reputation and his Washington contacts, Sachs turned HIID into a major conduit for U.S.AID, World Bank and IMF funds for structural-adjustment programs in the Third World and the former Soviet bloc. The foundering of its flagship Russia project raises disturbing questions about the goals, methods and track

record of U.S. development assistance.

Harvard has tried to dismiss the affair as a minor ethical lapse in an otherwise successful program. However, the men fired—economics professor and Russia project director Andrei Shleifer and Moscow field manager Jonathan Hay—were the architects and chief executives of HIID's Russian reform strategy. U.S.AID's notice of suspension to Harvard charged that "Hay used resources financed by U.S.AID to support the private investment activities of Shleifer's wife, Nancy Zimmerman." These activities included "buying and selling Russian bonds, tracking deposits and withdrawals from the investments' Russian bank accounts, consulting about tax aspects of the investments and possible additional investment opportunities."

Hay, a Harvard Law School graduate hired to advise the Russian government on securities law, capital-markets tax reform and privatization, was accused of using his insider knowledge to play the highly profitable market in Russian state treasury bills. He has acknowledged making the investments but claims to have been unaware of any ethical or contractual prohibitions. U.S.AID is also investigating allegations that two investment funds managed by Hay's girlfriend, Beth Hebert, were granted preferential access to the Russian securities market.

Official spin says that the problem begins and ends with these allegations. "As I see it, this is not related to Russian politics or American politics," says Richard Morningstar, a top State Department official who coordinates aid to the former Soviet Union. "This only involves the actions of two individuals."

But informed critics have been warning for almost a year that U.S.AID and Harvard's Russia project were a scandal waiting to happen. An article by George Washington Uni-

versity associate research professor Janine R. Wedel, published in the journal *Democratizatsiya* last fall, warned of the dangers of HIID's cozy relationship with a small group of high-flying Russian free marketeers. "More than mere assistance, aid became a political resource for certain Russian reformers," Wedel wrote. "This resource was allocated in the communist tradition, through patronage networks."

Arriving in Russia as the Soviet Union was collapsing in late 1991, Hay and Shleifer met and shortly thereafter began cultivating a group of bright, dynamic, pro-Western Russian reformers from St. Petersburg. Its leading light was a young English-speaking economist named Anatoly Chubais, whose subsequent meteoric rise to the heights of Kremlin power owed much to the access and resources placed at his disposal by HIID.

"The result of U.S. aid activity here was that the personal connections of Chubais and his friends became the public financial interests in Russia," says Andrei Piontkowski, an analyst with the Center for Strategic Studies, an independent Moscow think tank. "It's an American approach. They need a single figure to personify reforms. Aid was concentrated in the hands of the St. Petersburg group, and that helped the St. Petersburg group to create a financial oligarchy in Russia."

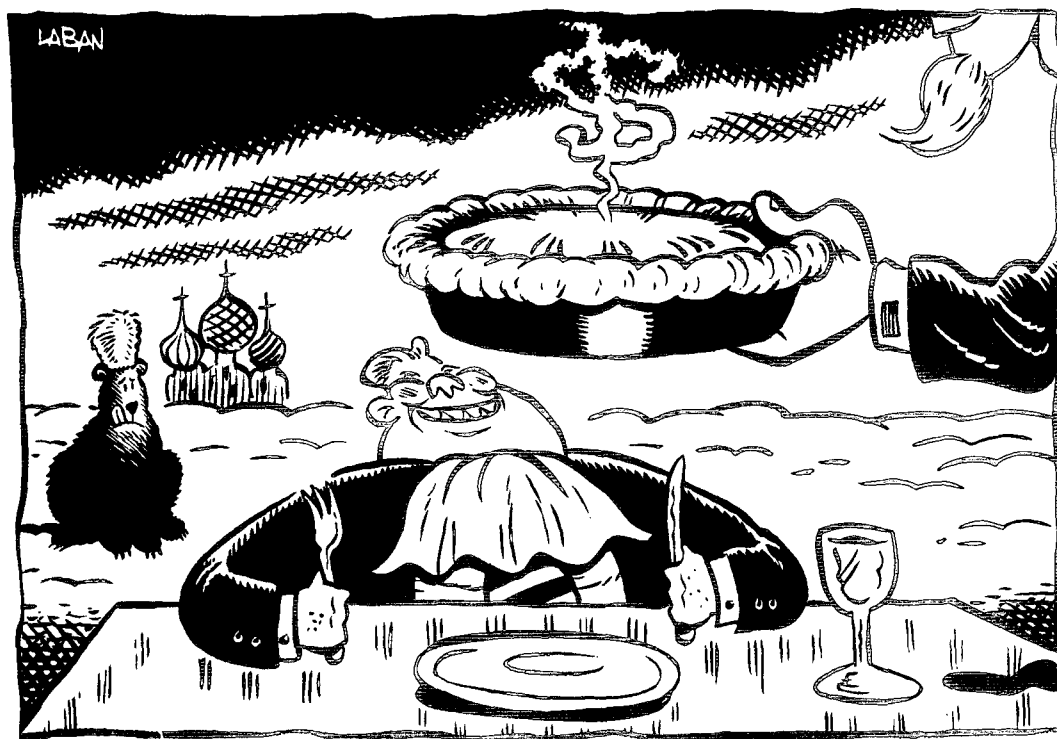
After large-scale U.S. aid began in 1992, HIID set up the Russian Privatization Center (RPC) and the Institute for a Law-Based Economy (ILBE), both founded by government decree but legally private. These institutional hybrids, staffed with American advisers and run by Chubais cronies, were designed as a pathway around existing administrative bodies. The murky nature of their status allowed all participating parties—HIID, U.S.AID, the Russian government and the members of the St. Petersburg group—to deny responsibility for questionable or unpopular policies. Increasingly, the RPC, the ILBE and several offshoots usurped the functions of government ministries in designing the mass privatization of the Russian economy, creating the securities markets, and shaping bankruptcy laws and tax reform. Over the past five years, these agencies have attracted some \$3 billion in loans and aid, including \$1.2 billion from U.S.AID. In some cases, they negotiated and managed loans that the Russian government is responsible for

repaying. As HIID's empire grew, American advisers often connived with St. Petersburg group government officials to prepare aid proposals that the Americans themselves subsequently supervised.

"All of these circumstances present in U.S. aid to Russia—one group's near-monopoly on aid in support of market reform, support of old patronage networks and top-down reform, and the creation of quasi-private organizations used as political machines—make it easy for representatives of the St. Petersburg group and HIID to actively pursue their own individual interests and to work on all sides of the table both in Russia and with the donors," warned Wedel.

Political abuse of aid money was not uncommon. For example, the public relations firm hired by U.S.AID to popularize one program, voucher privatization, changed the campaign's slogan "Your Voucher—Your Choice" in radio and TV spots to "Your Choice—Russia's Choice" during the 1993 parliamentary elections. Russia's Choice was the name of Chubais' political party. U.S.AID subsequently fired the firm.

Chubais worked closely with HIID on virtually every



economic reform project. The collaboration began in 1992, when HIID put Chubais in charge of overseeing \$58 million in U.S.AID funding to publicize the voucher-privatization program. Under the direction of Chubais' State Property Committee, every Russian citizen was given a certificate to redeem for shares in state-owned enterprises.

According to the U.S. State Department's 1996 annual report on aid to the former Soviet Union, "Russia's mass privatization program was successfully completed in July 1994 with state assets having been transferred to over 40

million new shareholders." In reality, only a tiny minority wound up owning a few profitable enterprises, while the bulk of Russians were left holding worthless paper as the national economy collapsed, capital investment plummeted and most industry ground to a halt.

That first wave of privatization was the only key reform ever ratified by Russia's legislature. All subsequent programs were implemented without public discussion by presidential decree, after Boris Yeltsin's tanks destroyed the first post-Soviet parliament and a new constitution concentrated power in the presidency.

The HIID operation adjusted smoothly to the post-1993 top-down model of economic reform. The U.S.-backed free marketeers found it easier to draft decrees for Yeltsin to sign into force, avoiding the tedious process of democratic consent required to pass legislation through the new parliament, to which Russian voters stubbornly kept returning opposition majorities.

The loans-for-shares program, Chubais' second-stage privatization scheme that cemented his relations with a group of bankers, would never have survived public scrutiny. Loans-for-shares transferred controlling interests in the crown jewels of Russian industry—the lucrative raw materials sector—to a handful of financial insiders, already the big winners from the first privatization campaign, in return for loans to the state. The banks selected to conduct the auctions disqualified all competitors and acquired the assets for themselves at the floor bid price. To date, none of the shares has been redeemed, and they remain in the possession of those banks. Public outrage over loans-for-shares was so intense that Yeltsin dismissed Chubais from his post as deputy prime minister in January 1996, citing his "grave mistakes" in the conduct of privatization.

Chubais was immediately hired by HIID as a "consultant," the apparent source of his \$291,300 nongovernmental 1996 declared income. Six weeks later, Yeltsin took him back to head his presidential re-election campaign. In that capacity, Chubais was instrumental in persuading Russia's leading bankers—the very people he had enriched through privatization—to use their recently acquired control of the media in support of the old Kremlin boss.

Chubais went on to become the newly re-elected President Yeltsin's powerful chief of staff and, this spring, was reappointed to government with the dual portfolio of finance minister and first deputy premier in charge of economic policy. He is now the driving force behind a new wave of privatization, harsh budget-cutting and tax reforms that are widely lauded in the West.

But something has gone awry in Chubais' long-time association with HIID. After the scandal broke in late May, Chubais called a press conference in which he passionately defended Hay and Shleifer, but slammed Harvard. He claimed he had asked U.S.AID to cancel HIID's Russia contract.

"The investigation which was made against the Harvard researchers has some kind of political roots, and I guess that

these roots are produced by those in the United States who do not support the ideas of the Russian radical reforms," Chubais said, speaking in English. "That's why I decided it's not convenient for me to have business with this kind of institution."

What went wrong, experts say, is that Chubais' allegiances have shifted. An old St. Petersburg crony of Chubais, Dmitry Vasiliev, head of Moscow's Federal Securities Commission, has been working closely with HIID to lay the foundation for capital markets in Russia. Together they have designed a model based on the U.S. system, which restricts banks from engaging in securities trading.

But Chubais' power base is the bankers' group. With the Russian government now borrowing cheaper money on the Eurobond market, the fast, easy money has moved from bonds to the stock market. Chubais now reportedly favors a German-style stock market, in which large banks control blocks of shares and appoint company directors, crowding small investors out of the picture. The rest of the German model, including strict regulation, has not been mentioned.

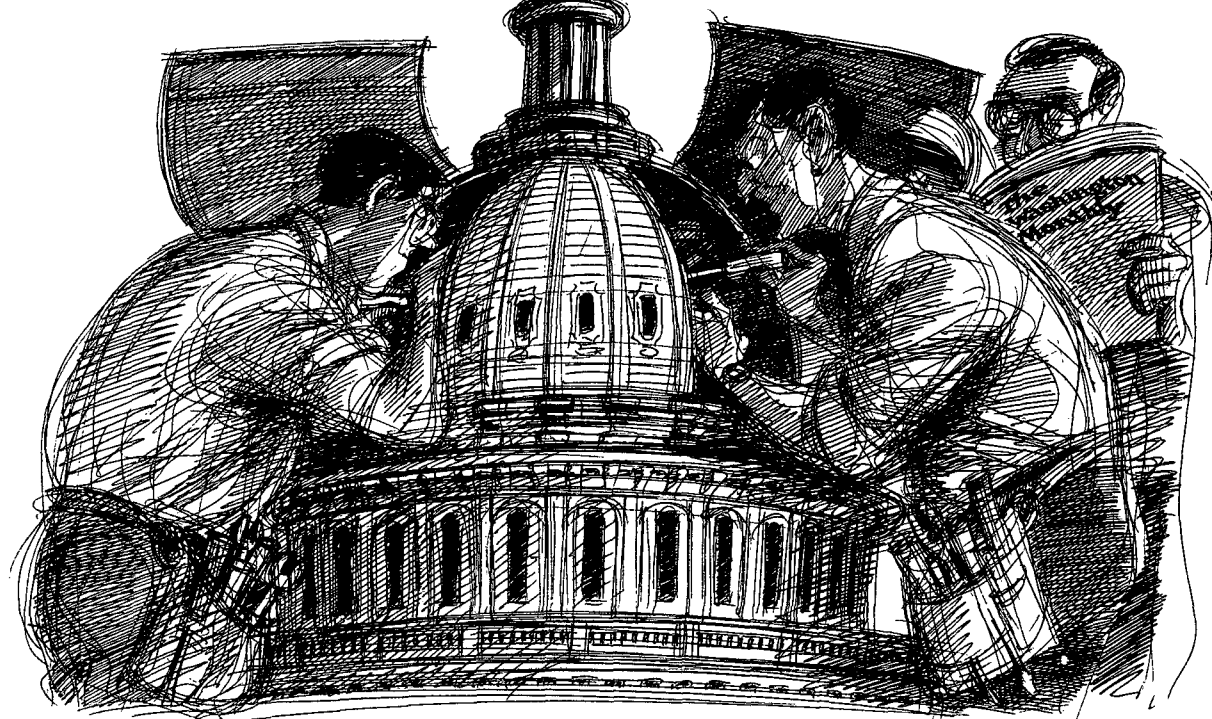
"Russia is no longer the open arena for outside ideas that it was five years ago," says a Western diplomat who asked not to be named. "It has developed its own indigenous capitalists, who have their own distinct imperatives. Chubais has climbed to the top largely by cooperating with these people, and he is certainly acting for them in this struggle. He doesn't need Harvard anymore."

We may never get the full story on how HIID came to be booted out of Russia, but the long-term effects are starting to come into focus. "These assistance efforts may one day be considered one of the greatest and most costly failures in contemporary history," Constantine Menges, director of George Washington University's transitions to democracy program told a congressional hearing last year. "In trusting economists with the success or failure of the historic opportunity for the economic transformation of Russia ... the leadership of the United States compounded this mistake by also entrusting them with the future of democratization."

The scandal may end up fueling an angry anti-Western, anti-market backlash among Russia's neglected, defrauded and impoverished majority. The central fallacy of HIID's Russia program, Wedel argued, lay "in thinking that lasting institutions can be built by supporting particular people, instead of helping to facilitate processes and the rule of law. ... When support is concentrated in one group of reformers with American leanings and ties and whose American colleagues are both recipients and overseers of the aid, the West simply encourages anti-Western, anti-reform elements who can point with glee to the absence of real, measurable benefits to the host country as a sign that Russia is being exploited by the West."

Fred Weir is an *In These Times* contributing editor based in Moscow. **Dorothy Rosenberg** is a research fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington. She is currently in Russia working as co-coordinator of a joint U.S.-Russian project on strategies for a sustainable transformation.

Capitol Repair Kit



While Washington burns with partisan rhetoric, we cool the air with clear-headed, innovative solutions to some of the nation's most unyielding problems. And we have fun doing it. **The Washington Monthly** explores the quirks, cons, and paralysis that too often underpin American politics—then we offer a sensible way out. *The New York Observer* says we are the magazine "to which anyone who gives a damn about this country must subscribe."



SUBSCRIBE NOW AND SAVE!

☐ YES! Enter my subscription for a full year (10 issues) to **The Washington Monthly** for only \$29.50.

Name

Address

City State Zip

☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me later

Charge my ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

Credit Card # Exp.

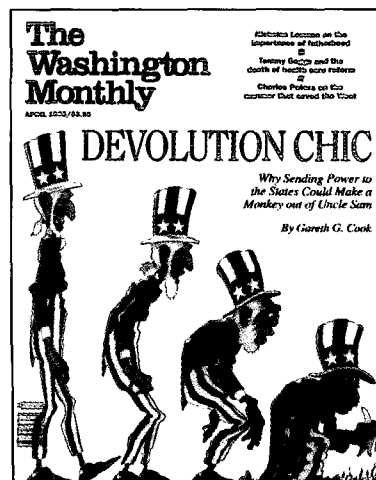
The Washington Monthly

Box 587

Mount Morris, IL 61054

For Canadian and other foreign subscriptions add \$7. Please remit U.S. funds.

"... holds up a deadly accurate mirror to the Washington political culture, exposing its hypocrisies, stupidities, and unexpected triumphs." —*Chicago Tribune*



B L A C K A M E R I C A

The big payback

*Do white
Americans owe
their black
compatriots
reparations for
centuries of
slavery and
discrimination?*

By Salim Muwakkil

In early June, the United States and several European allies celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan, the U.S.-funded program that rebuilt post-World War II Europe. The plan, which is often credited with preserving liberal democracy in Western Europe, offers compelling evidence of the wonders that can be wrought by large-scale, targeted investment. In 1947, the United States pledged \$13.3 billion—the equivalent of nearly \$90 billion in today's dollars—to help reassemble the remnants of 16 European countries (including Germany) shattered by the war. The grants, low-interest loans and currency transfers that the plan funneled to crippled European countries between 1948 and 1951 sparked one of history's most amazing economic recoveries. Winston Churchill called it "the most unsordid act in history."

The orgy of self-congratulation that accompanied the plan's anniversary has led some African-Americans to question why the U.S. government hasn't undertaken a similar effort on their behalf. After all, they see obvious parallels between their predicament and that faced by Europe 50 years ago. Conditions in the nation's most depressed urban black communities are often compared to the ravages of war. And as long as these conditions are allowed to deteriorate, they warn, American society faces grave danger.

They feel that they are owed their Marshall Plan. Large-scale investment in black communities is good public policy, to be sure. But it is also just compensation for the most sordid act, to alter Churchill's phrase, in American history: slavery.

"No one asked Europe to 'pick itself up by its bootstraps' the way they demand of blacks," says Hannibal Afrik, a retired teacher in the Chicago public school system and a prominent black nationalist organizer, "although the devastation of World War II

was hardly as drastic as that suffered by enslaved Africans and their descendants through 250 years of chattel slavery and a century of apartheid. If the United States thought that kind of massive aid was essential for the Europeans—even for our former enemy—after five years of war, then why isn't something similar being considered for those victimized by more than 350 years of structural discrimination?" Afrik also notes that Germany paid extensive compensation to Jewish victims of Nazi persecution and to Israel for the cost of integrating Jewish refugees into the Jewish state.

Afrik is co-chair of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA), a group formed in 1987 to promote the idea that African-Americans deserve compensation for slavery and the racial discrimination that followed. Although proposals for reparations have long been a plank in the platform of most black nationalist groups, the idea didn't attract broad community support until 1988, when Congress passed a bill compensating Japanese-Americans interned during World War II. "When large numbers of the black community saw Japanese-Americans get an apology and financial compensation for historical wrongs committed against them, they asked themselves, 'Why not us?'" Afrik says. "After that, many began to understand where we were coming from."

In recent years, the idea has caught fire. Black community forums across the country and black-oriented publications like *Emerge* have focused attention on the issue. Mainstream black leaders have begun to call for reparations in one form or another. The Rev. Jesse Jackson, for example, endorsed the concept at an African-American summit meeting in New Orleans in 1989.

A recent column by the *Washington Post's* William Rasp-



©1997 TERRY LABAN

berry brought the views of author and Georgetown University adjunct professor Richard America to a wider public. According to America, author of the book *Paying the Social Debt: What White America Owes Black America*, the United States owes its black citizens between \$5 trillion and \$10 trillion. He bases his estimates on the work of economists James Marketti of the University of Wisconsin and Lester Thurow of MIT, among others. Using population figures, price statistics and other historical data, these economists have devised models for calculating what Marketti calls the "unpaid black equity" in the slavery-era U.S. economy. Marketti and Thurow estimate this unpaid equity to be in the trillions of dollars, America says, but to arrive at a more accurate figure one must account for the harmful effects of the century of discrimination that followed emancipation.

"[This equity] should be repaid primarily through investment in human capital—education and training over two to three generations," America suggests. "It should also be repaid through investments in targeted housing, capital formation and business creation."

If reparations are a difficult concept for most Americans to accept, America argues, it's because African-Americans have defined their grievance with American society as a problem of discrimination and prejudice. They have left aside the equally reasonable argument that white Americans have unjustly enriched themselves at blacks' expense.

Proposals for reparations are not a new idea. Thaddeus Stevens, the leading Radical Republican of the Reconstruction era proposed (using a phrase that has become a catch phrase

of the reparations movement) that ex-slaves be awarded "40 acres and a mule." The Radical Republicans managed to pass a bill setting aside 3 million acres of land, but President Andrew Johnson later vetoed the measure.

Even some Southern Democrats of that era understood how unfair it was to release penniless freedmen into an environment for which they were woefully ill-prepared. In his 1988 book, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution*, Eric Foner wrote about Robert Toombs, a prominent Georgia Democrat who in 1863 gave each of his liberated slaves a house and a mule. Foner noted that there were other cases of such generosity, but they were rare. More commonly, "planters evicted from their plantations those blacks too old or infirm to labor, and transformed 'rights' enjoyed by slaves—clothing, housing, access to garden plots—into commodities for which payment was due."

Reparations advocates argue that the inequities set in motion by this history have been compounded and reinforced by discriminatory policies such as segregation, disfranchisement and racially motivated violence, not to mention lingering presumptions of black inferiority.

"Just look at the condition of black people in this country," Afrik says. "Go into any city, into any town and you'll find similar conditions and similar suffering with the black communities of those different places." He blames these miseries on the trauma of slavery and its persistent legacy. "We were in slavery for 10 generations, victims of American apartheid for four more. We've only been officially 'free' since the 1964 Civil Rights Act—a bit more than one generation."

Such arguments cut little ice with many African-American critics, who consider calls for reparations yet another excuse for inaction. "If a mugger knocks you down, do you wait for the mugger to come and pick you up?" asks Robert Woodson, president of the right-of-center National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise in Washington. "[The reparations argument] is escapism, a way to escape responsibility for doing anything affirmative to improve your conditions."

Walter Williams, a conservative black economist and columnist, takes issue with reparations for a different reason. "It's perverse and immoral to suggest that some poor white kid who's the son of a coal miner in West Virginia owes me—someone in the top 1 or 2 percent of income earners—some money," he says.

Conservatives are not the only African-Americans who oppose reparations. The subject runs afoul of those progressives who argue that black organizers should focus on issues and strategies designed to transcend racial, ethnic, gender and other "identity" lines. Even those who support reparations in principle, such as Barbara Ransby, professor of African-American Studies at the University of Illinois-Chicago and one of the founders of a new group called the Black Radical Congress, are wary of an "identity politics" backlash. It's important to make a compelling argument that the U.S. government has a historic and moral responsibility to address the conditions of enslaved Africans' descendants, Ransby argues, but reparations may not work in practice. "Opponents would easily be able to exploit racial resentments," she says. "And that possibility could be too big of a risk to take."

Howard Winant, a professor of sociology at Temple Uni-

versity and author of the 1994 book *Racial Condition: Politics, Theory, Comparisons*, argues that the reparations issue ultimately runs aground on the "putative obligations of both the living and the dead." How, he asks, does one compute the obligation of those born a century after slavery was abolished? And who qualifies for reparations? "It's hard to agree that all whites owe all blacks, since there are different degrees to which people are implicated," Winant argued in *Poverty & Race*, a newsletter published by the Washington, D.C.-based Poverty & Race Research Action Council. The issue should not be whether or how much whites should pay blacks in compensation, he wrote, but inducing the state to "undertake egalitarian and redistributive policies."

Advocates of reparations might argue that Winant's notion of "egalitarian and redistributive policies" is not far from their own. Both perspectives, however, are at odds with mainstream American opinion. With the passage of the Civil Rights Initiative in California and similar anti-affirmative action bills in Texas, the public does not seem particularly receptive to the idea of earmarking any significant amount of public funds—much less the \$10 trillion that Richard America suggests—solely for black Americans.

In the early '60s, this country's leadership seemed to understand the need for compensatory programs to help blacks get their piece of the American Dream. President Lyndon Johnson provided a lyrical rationale for affirmative action and other race-specific aid programs in a 1965 speech: "You do not take a person who for years has been hobbled by chains, and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line, and then say, 'You are free to compete with all the others.'"

Johnson's motives were ostensibly moral, but other, more compelling considerations came into play. American cities were going up in smoke. From 1964 to 1969, there were more than 300 explosions of urban unrest in America's cities. Studies found that racist exclusion was a precipitating factor in these outbreaks of violence. Affirmative action was meant to defuse that anger.

Today, there seems to be a general feeling among white Americans that enough has already been done to compensate African-Americans for the wrongs of slavery and Jim Crow. Many believe that slavery happened too long ago to have much contemporary relevance. Other observers, however, warn that the country is now more racially divided than it was during the '70s, the high-water mark of federal compensatory programs. The buoyant economy, which boosted Clinton to his second term and the stock market to record highs, has failed to lift all boats. Only half of black male youths have jobs, and the overall unemployment rate for blacks is more than twice that of whites.

Policy-makers wring their hands over the failure of a panoply of stop-gap measures to extract African-Americans from the muddy bottom of the U.S. economy. Whether it's billed as reparations or a Marshall Plan for the urban poor, the time has come to invest in the future of black Americans. ◀

Available from *In These Times*

"In this fine study, Robert McChesney points out that the extent of public participation into communication policy-making is a measure of the level of democracy, and that the U.S. is achieving new records in decline of such participation.... McChesney's work has been of extraordinary importance.... It should be read with care and concern by people who care about freedom and basic rights."

—Noam Chomsky

also...

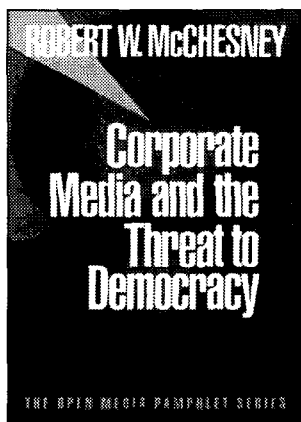
The Decline of Socialism in America: 1912-1925, by James Weinstein, can now be ordered directly from *In These Times*.

Corporate Media and the Threat to Democracy \$4.95
The Decline of Socialism in America: 1912-1925 \$15.95

Send payment to:

In These Times, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647

Add \$2.00 for shipping and handling



PARKS

It isn't easy staying green

N

elson A. Rockefeller Park is an oddity in New York City. A waterfront park in a city that has given over much of its shoreline to highways, it provides a narrow ribbon of greenery in Manhattan's financial district. Parents with toddlers gather in the lavishly appointed playground, and joggers from nearby Battery Park City enjoy the river breeze.

Yet there's something odd about this park, beyond the oddity of a new public space at a time of unprecedented municipal tightfistedness. Those "Dog-Free Lawn" signs that pop up every few yards, for instance, don't quite seem like standard Parks Department issue. And those billiard-table-smooth lawns are a bit too perfect for a New York City park, even one as obviously new as this one. Only when you read the fine print on the long list of do's and don'ts at the park's entrance

does it start to make sense: The logo at the bottom is for the "Battery Park City Parks Corporation." A private company owns and operates this park.

Rockefeller Park is one of several strips of green that edge the new high-rise development of Battery Park City. It is a symbol of the change in how New York manages its public resources. Whether that change is for the better or worse, though, depends on your perspective. To Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, the privatized lawns of Battery Park City reflect the success of "public/private partnerships," the web of private contracts and downsized municipal oversight that has come to characterize city agencies from parks to welfare. But to many parks advocates and users, they signify a frightening future for urban space: green oases near the homes and offices of the affluent, and derelict public parks in neighborhoods where the less well-heeled live.

For New York and other cities where green space—or open space of any kind—is at a premium, parks supply a wide range of

city residents' needs. They are ad-hoc ball fields, environments for quiet contemplation and pockets of fresh air in the surrounding ocean of asphalt—the "lungs of the city," as they were called by the old Progressive Era reformers who saw open space as a needed antidote to the city's overcrowded slums. In New York in particular, city parks have traditionally also been one of the few places for public political gatherings: Tompkins Square and Union Square have been hotbeds of anarchist and labor activity since the 19th century, and Central Park has played host to anti-nuke rallies, Soweto Day commemorations and the closing ceremonies of Gay Pride Day.

The urban budget-cutting frenzies of the last 20 years have taken a heavy toll on this precious public resource. Governments across the nation have been looking to private interests to fund their public parkland. For example, Michigan contracted with Pepsi to be its official state park soft drink, and Sacramento County, Calif., has considered bankrolling a giant new park with private amenities like a conference center and golf course. But New York has led the way. Private donations to New York City parks have increased almost four-fold since 1987, at the same time as public spending has been slashed by 31 percent in real dollars.

Certainly, there's nothing sinister about these new private parks on the surface. The rules of behavior at Rockefeller Park are no more strict than those at many publicly run parks. And the Battery Park City Authority, the private non-profit that also runs the nearby housing and office development on land leased from the city, isn't exactly checking IDs at the door; park denizens include lunching Wall Street workers, the upscale residents of Battery Park City, and visiting tourists who have tired of waiting for the nearby ferries

Public/private partnerships have allowed some of New York City's parks to flower as never before. But at what cost?

By Neil deMause

to the Statue of Liberty.

Bryant Park, a tiny half-block oasis that provides the only available greenery across 40 blocks of midtown Manhattan, is another apparent success story. In the early '80s, the city turned the park over to the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation, a subsidiary of the local business improvement district. (BIDs, as they are popularly known, are special districts where a private board can levy fees on their area landholders in order to "improve" the surrounding blocks.) The corporation, whose primary backers are Home Box Office and the telecommunications giant NYNEX, renovated a severely dilapidated space used primarily by homeless people and drug dealers, converting it into a clean and safe new park that is packed at lunchtime with employees from the surrounding corporate offices. Private security guards patrol the new park each day until the 7 p.m. closing time. In a wry reference to Bryant Park's many open-air cafes, sociologist Sharon Zukin has dubbed the city's policy "pacification by cappuccino."

Ever since New York's long-serving parks commissioner Henry Stern declared almost a decade ago that "parks are a refuge, not an asylum," the city has been aggressively working to drive out "loiterers," specifically the homeless, from city parks. A turning point in city parks policy came when the city renovated Tompkins Square Park in the early '90s after years of pitched battles with local anarchist groups and homeless encampments—including one police riot in which hundreds were arrested or beaten, including confused yuppies out for a late-night stroll. From then on, public parks would be for a specific kind of public: Dog runs, green markets and restaurants have replaced more downscale gathering spaces like the old Tompkins Square band shell.

These sorts of renovations often increase the number of people who use the parks. But the new policy also conspicuously dovetails with the desire of property owners for green spaces that will increase the value of the surrounding blocks. "The private group is not just doing this as philanthropy; they're doing it to raise property values," says Zukin, whose CUNY Graduate Center office is right across the street from Bryant Park. "They're also doing it as a trade-off for control of the park." And unlike the parks department, the Bryant Park BID is not accountable to the public—not even to its own members, since BID leadership is appointed by an unelected board.

Even Central Park, the "single most democratic space in the city," as one local journalist memorably called it, has begun subtly shifting its focus. The Central Park Conservancy, a private nonprofit group, has raised millions of dollars in private contributions since being given virtual control over the park in 1980. It has used the money to renovate huge swathes of the park with an eye to more genteel uses. For example, the Central Park Zoo has been upgraded from a ramshackle public amenity with free admission to a state-of-the-art privately run "wildlife center," with a \$2.50 entry fee.

Between the Central Park Conservancy, the Prospect Park Alliance in Brooklyn, the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation and the Battery Park City Parks Corporation, some of the city's most prominent open spaces have been placed under partial private control in exchange for private fundraising. This turn of events has left the city's longtime parks advocates torn. "The money that has been made available by having admission charges has kept those gardens beautiful in an era of no resources from the government," says Dave Lutz of the Neighborhood Open Space Coalition, which works primarily with neighborhood community garden groups, in reference to the city's once free botanic gardens. "But they have also excluded important communities from these spaces. There's no question about it that when you put an admission fee on a place like that, a lot of people don't get to use it as often as they once did."

And even as the Parks Council, the city's leading parks advocacy group, was granting the Battery Park City parks an award for design excellence, its officials worried about the implications of private influence on the city parks system. They're particularly bothered by the specter of increased advertising in privatized parks, which the city cannot regulate. "But then," adds the council's Marcia Reiss, "the Parks Department is doing more advertising than we'd like to see. Because they are hard-pressed for money, they are inviting a lot of advertisers into the park as they never did before."

"We're never going to change Central Park to 'Budweiser Park,'" a mayoral aide promised the *New York Times* in May. But the city did rent out the park's Great Lawn to Disney for the premiere of its movie *Pocahontas* (for \$1 million, 20 percent of which went to pay police overtime for the event) in June 1995. It also allowed a candy company to hand out Snickers bars at a promotional event last summer and recently solicited bids from soft-drink companies to become the "official soft drink of the Parks Department."

Parks advocates, however, are most concerned about what privatization has meant for the rest of the city parks system, which has seen its already meager funding dwindle still further over a decade of city budget cuts. "They're not bringing as much money into the system as the system needs," says Reiss. "I think there has been a misleading impression that because Central Park has been so successful, that every other park can be operated under the same model. But Central Park is in the most affluent area in New York City. That model works for Central Park; it won't work for communities in the South Bronx."

To see the flip side of privatization, you need only go about two miles downstream from Rockefeller Park, to the old shipping district of Red Hook, Brooklyn. Long devoid of industry and cut off from the rest of the borough by the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, Red Hook has a park of its own: Coffey Park, a square block of greenery and stately sycamore trees across the street from the low-rise housing project that dominates the neighborhood.

©1997 KIT BOYCE



On a sunny Memorial Day, Coffey Park is virtually empty—no one at the three rotting picnic benches, no one lounging on the lawns of uncut grass overgrown with dandelions. The park's building in the adjoining playground features brightly colored murals on all sides but is missing half

of its roof. A woman barbecuing with her family at Coffey Park's eastern fringe chats freely about the park, though she declines to give her name. "They keep it pretty clean—when they want to," she says. "The main thing we need is a bathroom. There's no bathroom."



Subscribe to ITT!

NEW SUBSCRIPTION.

You'll receive your first issue in 4-6 weeks.
Please check price and terms below. **AST1**

RENEW NOW.

We'll extend your current subscription for as long as you like. This saves you worries about expiring and helps us save money and the environment by not sending renewal notices and bills. **ART1**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

Fill out old address above, and new address below.
Allow 4-6 weeks for change.

NEW ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

WHAT A GREAT GIFT IDEA!

(Just try and find a gift with more thought behind it. Fill out your name above and the lucky person's name here.) **XSTH1**

NAME OF RECIPIENT _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PRICES & TERMS

- ☐ One year, 26 issues of In These Times: \$36.95
☐ Six months, 13 issues: \$19.95 ☐ Institutional, one year: \$59.00
☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me Charge my ☐ Visa ☐ MC

ACCOUNT NUMBER / EXPIRATION DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

Canadian orders, add: \$27.50 (one year), \$13.50 (six months) postage.
All other foreign orders add: \$41.00 (one year), \$20.50 (six months).

Mail to: IN THESE TIMES Customer Service,
308 Hitt St., Mt. Morris, IL 61054
Or call: 1-800-827-0270

Coffey Park doesn't look much different from the way Central Park did two decades ago, when the *New York Times* termed the city parks system "a dirty, unkempt, vandalized shadow of its former self." The difference is that while Central Park has undergone a renaissance sparked in part by private money, Coffey Park, like the hundreds of other small neighborhood parks that dot the outer boroughs of New York, has largely deteriorated in silence, far from the eye of the Manhattan-based policy-makers and media.

A recent study by New York's Independent Budget Office, a recently established budget oversight agency, bears this out. Over the last 10 years, city parks funding has been slashed to the bone. The city now spends less than 0.5 percent of its budget on parks, the lowest rate of any major U.S. city. (That the parks haven't fallen apart completely can be credited to the city's workfare program, which has funneled 5,000 welfare participants into unpaid part-time park-cleaning jobs, even as the parks department has laid off over half that many permanent employees.) In Manhattan, which receives two-thirds of all private parks donations (more than three-quarters of which goes to the Central Park Conservancy alone), total park spending, public and private combined, has dropped by 21 percent since 1987. In the Bronx, combined parks funding has plummeted 46 percent over the same period, and the other outer boroughs have fared nearly as poorly.

Making it worse for these poorer neighborhoods, adds Lutz from the Neighborhood Open Space Coalition, is the city's policy of selling off city-owned land that local residents have been using for community gardens. "The community gardens almost always are in neighborhoods that are severely underserved," he says. Regardless of what price the land will fetch (not much in most depressed areas), the city government has pursued a policy of selling any city-owned vacant land for whatever money it will raise. As Lutz explains, "The city wants to sell off all of its inventory of land, and they refuse to look at a community garden. They put their faces up to the fence and see nothing."

This loss of green space would set off alarms if it were happening in Manhattan. But the deterioration of outer borough parks has flown under media radar. "My hope is just to get people to realize what's going on," says Lutz, "and it's harder when Central Park is being cared for."

It's hard to root against cleaner parks, no matter what neighborhood they're located in—even Lutz's group is eagerly trying to secure private funding for a new park in a planned luxury development on the Manhattan waterfront. But like the city's special public schools, which cater to elite students while other children are forced to study in corridors and converted closets, New York's parks policy seems to be evolving toward an open-space triage: just green enough in the right places to allow the rest of the city to go to seed unnoticed. ◀

Neil deMause is a freelance writer based in Brooklyn.

IN PRINT

Challenging movies

By Lawrence Levi

Most critics," writes Jonathan Rosenbaum in *Movies as Politics*, "lulled by the outsized studio ad campaigns and eager for the currency that comes with instant recognition, tend to be much lazier than they used to be about grappling with more difficult and innovative pictures, and many go out of their way to avoid them entirely." Jonathan Rosenbaum is not most critics. As he demonstrates in his second collection of essays and reviews, he's anything but discouraged by challenging movies, and he refuses to take unchallenging ones at face value. Rosenbaum, film critic at the *Chicago Reader*, is a crusader—for foreign films, for experimental films, and for an integrity in popular cinema that's the antithesis of Hollywood products. "I believe movies are potentially important enough to be tested in relation to life," he writes, "not simply accepted as loose approximations or escapist alternatives."

In these 45 pieces, most of which originally appeared in the *Reader* as well as magazines like *Film Comment* and *Sight and Sound*, Rosenbaum attempts what most critics don't: to analyze films through the "cinematic apparatus as a whole—the institution that regulates the production, distribution, exhibition, consumption and discussion of movies." In almost every one of his long, contemplative reviews, he grapples with filmmakers' intentions in the course of making films, scrutinizes the actions of studios, distributors and publicists, and responds pointedly to other critics (primarily those at *The New Yorker*). Other critics' principal criterion in judging movies is, "Is it entertaining?" What Rosenbaum wants to know is, "What does it make you think about?"

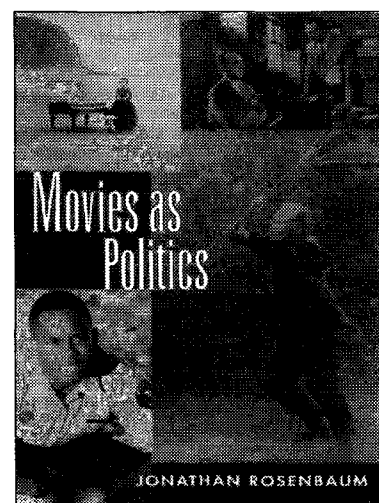
He divides his book into three sections, which are not as academic as their titles make them sound. His essays in the first section, "The Politics of Form," remind us that unconventional narrative form in movies is a kind of radical politics—a way of communicating complex and provocative ideas. The next section, "Entertainment as Oppression: The Hollywood Apparatus," suggests that Hollywood's deter-

minedly conventional works, imposed upon the public through inescapable advertising, are a form of cultural and intellectual oppression. "Issues of Ideology," the final section, examines the ideological content and political implications of a variety of ambitious films.

Above all, Rosenbaum strives to show that it's vital to evaluate thoughtfully one's reactions to movies. He stresses that "the moments when conflicts or contradictions arise usually prove to be highly instructive." He values the sort of cinema that invites these sorts of complex reactions: "The kind of cinema more interested in posing questions than in answering them—the cinema of Stroheim, Preminger, Rossellini, Cassavetes, Rivette and Kieslowksi, among others—is always bound to encounter resistance from viewers who go to movies in search of certainties, and who often settle for half-truths or outright lies as a consequence."

Rosenbaum considers honesty the most essential critical tool. He spurns notoriety: "At the moment the critic becomes a star, the critical discourse becomes a nightclub act," he quipped in his previous collection, *Placing Movies: The Practice of Film Criticism*. His own prose is lucid, straightforward and unadorned. Yet he employs a scholar's fount of knowledge in his work. For instance, he almost always has read the book upon which a film is based (and tells you when he hasn't); he seems to consider it a critic's duty, part of the necessary research.

One of Rosenbaum's most admirable projects is bringing to people's attention films they're not likely to read about anywhere else. As he wrote in this magazine recently ("Not Playing in a Theater Near You," March 31), the best contemporary foreign films are practically impossible to see in the United States—American distributors just aren't interested in them, and the number of theaters that show them are dwindling, thanks to the studios' monopoly on theater chains. In *Movies as Politics*, Rosenbaum champions experimental films that might otherwise be lost to history (Jacques Rivette's 13-hour *Out 1*, made in 1970). He highlights everything from the odd French love story (Chantal Akerman's *Night and Day*) to Taiwanese historical dramas (Hou Hsiao-hsien's *The Puppet Master*). (Although since he eschews easy genre classifications, he



Movies as Politics
By Jonathan Rosenbaum
University of California Press
359 pages, \$48 (cloth),
\$17.95 (paper)



Forrest Gump: The views in the film “smack of neocon jeering found in the pages of publications like *The American Spectator*.”

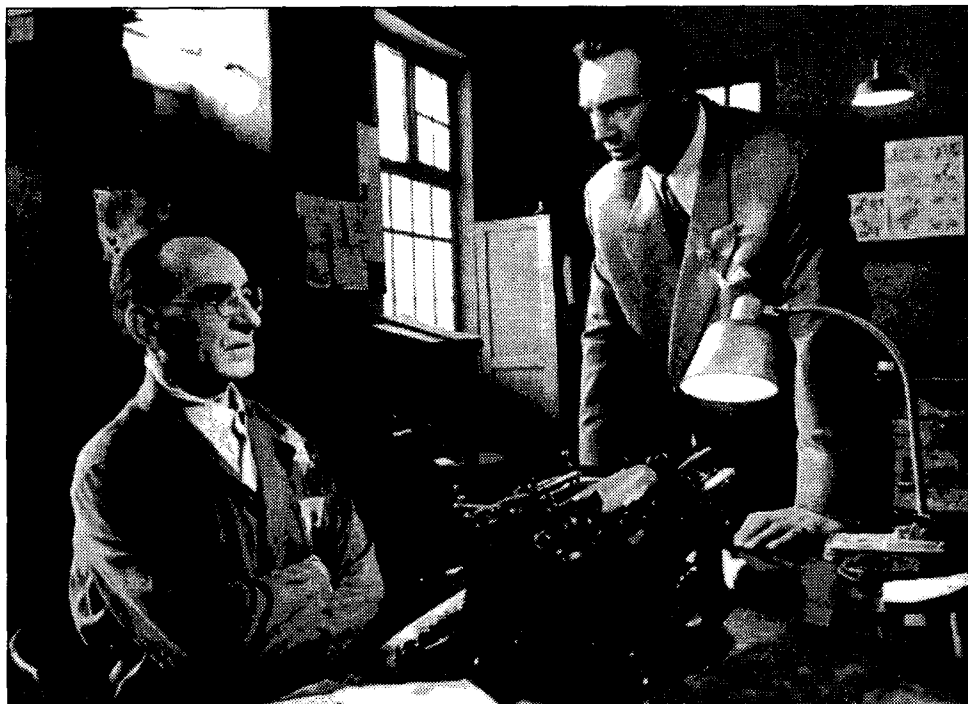
industry thrives. In the midst of praising Charles Burnett's *The Glass Shield*, he writes: “People who regard movies as an occasional diversion and nothing else will find it perfectly OK for people like Harvey and Bob [Weinstein, co-heads of Miramax] to serve as their cultural arbiters and commissars, ... dictating, for example, the emotional tone of the last scene in *The Glass Shield* on the basis of responses from teenagers at a Bronx preview. After all, the willing delegation of critical responsibility to a couple of brassy salesmen is the logical outcome when our culture considers the weekly grosses much more interesting and worthy of close analysis than anything else about a film.”

Relying on previews to determine how to end a movie, he says in another review, “makes about as much sense as sculpting our foreign policy around the public's gut reactions to TV news reports.” Rosenbaum lets us know exactly where he stands on the political spectrum, though that doesn't mean he toes the party line. In a fascinating review of *Schindler's List*, he tries to reconcile his emotional response (he wept) with his intellectual one: “[Spielberg's] main idea is to assist us in identifying with the Nazis—not with their cruelty, which we're supposed to recoil from, but with their privileged vantage point, their glamorous power and preeminence.” In his expansive look at *Malcolm X*, he writes: “One would like to think that

would never describe these films with such pat phrases as “French love story” or “Taiwanese historical drama.”)

What does Rosenbaum mean by “movies as politics”? As he explains early on, “My main purpose ... in this book is to argue that what is designed to make people feel good at the movies has a profound relation to how they think and feel about the world around them.” To that end, he explores the institutions and mechanisms of cinema as an industry, as well as the larger political climate of American xenophobia, anti-intellectualism and capitalist greed in which that

Schindler's List: Spielberg assists us in identifying with the Nazis' “privileged vantage point, their glamorous power and preeminence.”



[Spike] Lee would be capable of presenting Malcolm X's various messages without feeling obliged to advertise them, along with the caps and T-shirts." The views expressed in *Forrest Gump*, he writes, "smack of the neocon jeering found these days in the pages of publications like *The American Spectator*." On *Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse*, a 1991 documentary about the making of *Apocalypse Now*, he argues that it "only compounds and intensifies a refusal to deal with Vietnam that existed in embryo even in Coppola's film." *Mississippi Burning* is "racism posing as humanism"; *Star Wars*, "a guiltless celebration of unlimited warfare."

Why all this fervor? "Keeping politics out of movie reviews," he says in his introduction, "is precisely what makes it easier to cheer and celebrate such CNN 'movies'—or 'turkey shoots'—as *Operation Desert Storm* and *War in the Gulf*." Films don't just reflect our attitudes; they affect them.

As one might guess from the above, if there's anything frustrating about reading Jonathan Rosenbaum (aside from a few overlong plot summaries), it's that he rarely lets up. His earnestness only occasionally allows room for playfulness, and his grouching can get tiring, particularly in a collection as densely packed as this one. A friend of mine, a Rosenbaum fan, said that after a while she had to put down *Movies as Politics* and pick up a Pauline Kael book "just to get the sour taste out of my mouth."

This comparison would undoubtedly make Rosenbaum bristle. While in *Placing Movies* he acknowledged the "intensity and clarity" of her prose, he scathingly refers to Kael here as the dean of a "school of thought [that] says that movies should blow their wad—put up or shut up—the first time around, even (or especially) if you're a film critic."

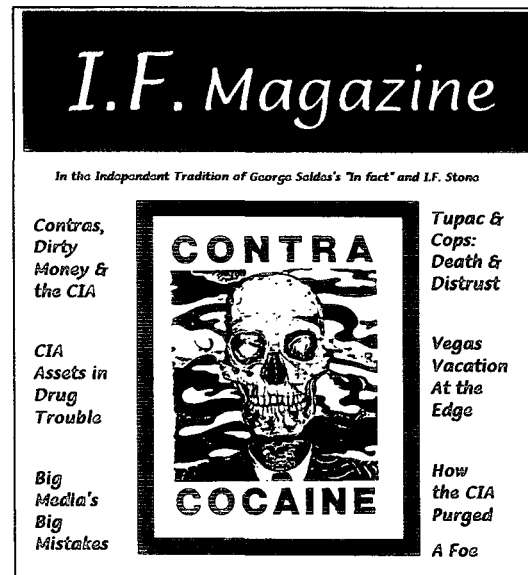
I happen to love Kael's criticism, mostly for the same reasons I love Rosenbaum's: They're both feisty, left-leaning iconoclasts who cut to the quick. (Ironically enough, their more unexpected opinions often overlap—they both dislike *Dr. Strangelove*, for example.) But he has a point. Kael dazzles and stuns you with her zippy, opinionated style; Rosenbaum offers an abundance of information and encourages you to ruminate. Kael's certitude would never allow her a summation as open-minded as this: "I have to confess that, as a thinker about spiritual and holy matters, [the Russian filmmaker Andrei] Tarkovsky often strikes me as pretentious, egocentric and downright offensive; his sexual politics ... are Neanderthal, and his view of piety is generally neither attractive nor inspiring. Yet as a passionate, critical thinker about the world we live in, and as a poetic filmmaker whose images and sounds have the ring of truth, I find it impossible to dismiss him. Even when his films irritate or infuriate me, they teach me something in spite of my objections."

Reading Rosenbaum may not be as much fun as reading Kael, but passages like this show that he can be even more refreshing and illuminating. Even when his reviews irritate you, they teach you something. ◀

Lawrence Levi is an associate editor at *Art & Antiques*.

Introducing:

I.F. Magazine -- a new investigative bi-monthly that rekindles the independent journalistic traditions of George Seldes (publisher of "In fact") and I.F. Stone. They were reporters in the mid-20th Century who spoke truth to power. "Tell the truth and run," Seldes advised.



S
U
B
S
C
R
I
B
E

I.F. Magazine is edited by investigative reporter Robert Parry, a two-decade veteran of Washington journalism who broke many of the Iran-contra stories for the AP, Newsweek and PBS Frontline -- including the first story about Oliver North's secret contra supply network.

[] Please send me six issues of *I.F. Magazine* (one year) for only \$22. (Outside U.S., add \$10) A sub includes free access to Media Consortium Web site.

[] Also, send me Robert Parry's new book, *Lost History: Contras, Cocaine & Other Crimes*, \$12.

Enclosed is a check or money order for \$_____ to The Media Consortium, Suite 102-231, 2200 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201. (Or orders can be placed through Visa/Mastercard by calling 1-800-738-1812 or 703-920-1802 or by sending Visa/MC data.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Visa/MC# (Circle one): _____

Exp. Date: _____

Getting organized

By David Dyssegaard Kallick

Linda Stout's *Bridging the Class Divide* is a rare contribution to the short shelf of books about community organizing published for a general audience. For that reason alone, it is well worth our attention. The founder of an innovative community group in central North Carolina, Stout has no illusions about where social change comes from. Change comes from the bottom up, through grass-roots pressure. And that pressure does not emerge spontaneously; it has to be organized. This may sound radical—or perhaps naive—to media pundits and Washington's power players. But to Stout, it is so self-evident that it is hardly worth mentioning. Readers who can follow her in that leap—and stick with her unevenly paced writing—will be excited to find a political perspective that involves activating a broad base of citizens rather than waiting for a political leader to appear on television.

Stout's personal story shows how she evolved into an organizer. Born in the North Carolina Piedmont to working-poor, Quaker parents, she learned hardship at an early age. When she was five, a drunk driver crashed into the Stouts' car, setting off a horrifying chain of events that left her pregnant mother with one leg (the baby survived), Linda unconscious in the closet of an uncle's house (don't ask) and her father with a debt he would be paying until his death. Abuse, malpractice and discrimination come through clearly in Stout's understated telling of events.

Applying herself in secondary school to achieve her dream of attending college, Stout recalls struggling to learn a different, "middle-class" way of speaking to win the grudging respect of her teachers. In her second year of college, tuition increased, but her scholarship didn't. Unable to afford the extra fee, Stout dropped out and took a job at the local mill.

Stout got her first sense of community organizing when she moved to Charleston, S.C., in the late '70s. While working as a secretary, she did volunteer work on the side. She was drawn to, and learned lessons from, the women's

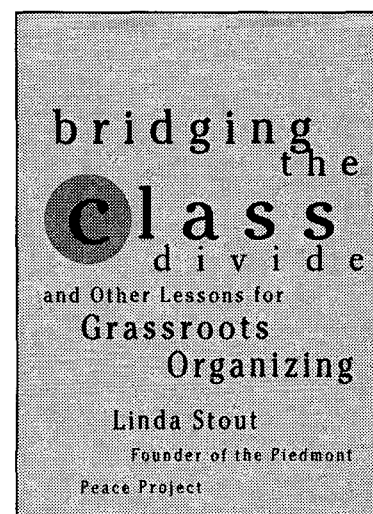
movement, but found herself ignored or put off when she tried to link the issues the group worked on with low-income women. Through a local peace group, she worked hard to get people of color to join in the calls for an end to U.S. intervention in Central America and a de-escalation of the arms race. She began to make headway under the tutelage of Septima Clark, a veteran of the civil rights movement and one of the great social-justice leaders of our time.

Stout's work seems to have been moving in innovative directions when her father died in December 1983, compelling her to return to the North Carolina Piedmont to take care of her mother. By this time, Stout had learned enough about how community groups worked to envision a career for herself as a community organizer. She talked at churches and held house meetings in a number of the surrounding counties. The emergent group, the Piedmont Peace Project, drew in mill workers, farmers, factory workers and service workers from some of the poorest areas of North Carolina. It attracted members from both sides of the region's starkly drawn color line. It built a leadership base of primarily low-income whites and African Americans—especially women—while retaining active middle-class and male participants.

Today, the PPP continues its work in the North Carolina Piedmont. Having completed a fellowship at Radcliffe's Bunting Institute, Stout is now director of the Peace Development Fund in Northampton, Mass.

In the chapter, "Building Bridges," Stout describes how the PPP organized voter-registration and get-out-the-vote drives, and public events with Mothers of the Disappeared from Central America. The group lobbied to cut funding for the MX missile and to increase support for social programs, and they mobilized low-income residents to pressure local officials to improve the infrastructure of their communities.

In the early days, the Piedmont Peace Project encountered opposition—slashed tires on get-out-the-vote vans, cut telephone lines, pressure on ministers who hosted PPP meetings. Violent attacks increased, reaching a crescendo in 1987 that drove the group underground for two years. Stout is understandably—but frustratingly—reluctant to say much about what happened for fear of endangering the participants.



Bridging the Class Divide and Other Lessons for Grassroots Organizing

By Linda Stout
Beacon Press
192 pp., \$16 (paperback)

Coming up for air in 1989 with renewed energy and revived middle-class support, the PPP continued its work influencing the district's congressional representative, putting pressure on local officials to improve infrastructure, working with laid-off Proctor-Silex employees, and supporting gay, lesbian and bisexual rights. Stout cautiously mentions her own coming out as a lesbian, but, again, the full story seems to be too personal to tell, leaving an uncomfortable gap in the book.

She sprinkles descriptions of clever tactics liberally throughout, making the book practical and fun reading for organizers. Local truck drivers distributed flyers nationwide. The group started a literacy program to develop confidence among low-income leaders. To gain attention, they put letters in express-mail envelopes before slipping them under church leaders' doors. They provided entertaining childcare at their meetings so that children would urge parents to attend future meetings. They placed stories about Proctor-Silex management's actions in the hometown newspapers of the members of the company's board of directors. These are some of the dozens of inventive ways the group got maximum impact from carefully husbanded resources.

Through all these actions, the PPP model, as Stout presents it, stresses the need to address issues of race, class, gender and sexual orientation in equal measure. Stout's greatest insights, however, come in her discussion of class.

Reading *Bridging the Class Divide*, I was reminded of a conversation some years ago with a trade unionist who complained about the way racism, sexism and classism were increasingly set up as parallel phenomena. Class, he argued, is fundamentally different from race or sex. The problem with being poor, he said, is not that you're discriminated against. The problem is simply that you don't have enough money. Stout argues—sometimes movingly—that discrimination is part of the problem of class. How you talk, how you feel about yourself, how you're treated in school, even the interest you pay on loans are different if you come from a low-income family than if you've grown up comfortably middle-class.

More to the point, Stout writes about how even the most progressive organizations tend to push low-income



members to the back of the auditorium, if not right out the door. She examines the small ways people let her know there was something not useful enough about the people she wanted to bring into the organization, and something not quite right about her to make her a leader. There was always someone else—usually a man, often with a graduate degree—who would be perceived as a “more credible” speaker or a better manager.

Even when national groups decided low-income people were an important constituency, outreach generally came in condescending terms. She gives the example of Randall Forsberg, founder of the Nuclear Freeze Campaign, who ended up being a significant supporter of Stout's work. When Stout first suggested that the peace movement reach out to poor communities, Forsberg said (as Stout recalls) that “it was the responsibility of middle-class people to do peace work for low-income people because they were too busy trying to survive.” When convinced that reaching out might be useful, Forsberg suggested that they get third graders to help write materials for a low-income audience. Stout patiently explained that people's thinking was not at a third-grade level just because their reading level was. Money, this anecdote suggests, is not the only thing separating the classes.

Stout's account of how local groups can integrate national and international perspectives is equally compelling. Outside organizers come into poor communities, she writes, and patronizingly assume people aren't interested in global economics or national politics. Low-income people may not respond to the way college-educated orga-

nizers talk about the issues. But, she says, people will respond to organizers who speak like them and talk about what they care about.

Using a towel she bought at a local store, Stout explains how PPP activists made their case for opposition to U.S. intervention in El Salvador in the '80s: "When people started talking about those 'damn foreigners,' we pulled out this towel and said, 'You know, you're right. We bought this towel in the local store in Kannapolis and, you're right, it's made by a foreigner. But, you know what? That worker only makes a couple dollars a day and that worker's children are going hungry.' ... And we'd say, 'Workers [in El Salvador] can't protest because the military would be sent in by the government to stop them from trying to get better working conditions and better pay. And the worker who made this towel works for an American textile mill that closed down here and moved to El Salvador.' Then we would point out that the U.S. government was supporting the military in El Salvador for the sake of American businesses. People really understood that. In ten minutes, we could have them moving from cussing the foreigners who they believed had taken their jobs to understanding that the U.S. government was responsible for protecting U.S. investments in those countries and giving the U.S. companies tax breaks to move there."

It's a virtuoso presentation. I wish we'd heard more of this kind of analysis during the NAFTA fights.

My biggest objection in Stout's generally sensitive and

smart political analysis is to her theory of oppression. "Unless institutional power reinforces the hurt and prejudice suffered by a group," Stout argues, "it is not oppression." According to her analysis, a person of color cannot be racist, or a woman sexist, because they do not have the institutionalized power to act on their prejudices. "Also, by definition, all white people are racist, not just because of the personal attitudes that we usually think of as racist, but because of the privilege white skin brings in our society." Whites can choose (as Stout has) to be active anti-racists. But just as Alcoholics Anonymous says even reformed drinkers are still alcoholics, Stout says even anti-racist whites are still racists.

I'm not convinced. Presenting oppression in this way simplifies people's complex experience. Being Jewish, for example, puts you sometimes on the top, sometimes on the bottom of America's uneasy racial calculus. As a Jew, am I oppressed? Am I the oppressor? Are the increasing numbers of multi-racial Americans half oppressed, half oppressor? (Wouldn't seeing yourself in this way be a profoundly alienating experience?)

Frederick Douglass is eloquent about the ways slave owners' personalities are distorted by seeing themselves as "masters." Feminists make a persuasive case that men can be emotionally crippled by the gender stereotypes they are forced into. Gay, lesbian and bisexual activists have done more than any other groups in recent years to show how the repression

of nonconformist sexual impulses is stifling to all of us. Elucidating the complex and contradictory ways oppression shapes our experience seems to me more productive and more true to life than forcing a binary opposition in which everyone falls squarely on one side or the other of every line of oppression.

If the book has a shortcoming, however, it is not the occasional troubles with political theory. The problem is that it's not as readable, as gripping a story, as clear an analysis as it might be. Stout makes a strong case for the need to develop a language to talk to a broad audience—one that includes less educated as well as more educated people, folks that come from a low-income perspective as well as those who come from the middle class. When Stout succeeds, she keeps general-interest audiences engaged and academic readers impressed; when she stumbles, she loses both audiences at once. ◀

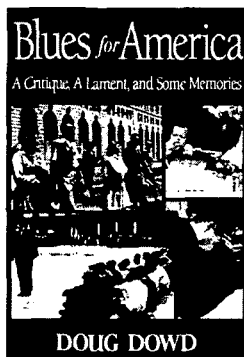
David Dyssegaard Kallick, formerly editor of *Social Policy* magazine, is writing a book about a new progressive politics.

"Is it possible for a political-economic history of the twentieth century to be warm, funny, and lovable? In Doug Dowd's hands, yes!..."

Blues for America

A CRITIQUE, A LAMENT, AND SOME MEMORIES

by DOUG DOWD



\$18.00 paper/\$38.00 cloth
320 pp. (\$3.00 p & h)

"BLUES FOR AMERICA is a scholar's deft survey of everything that happened between the 1920s and the 1990s—depressions, repressions, segregation, and wars and the resistance that arose to each in turn, related with SURPRISING WIT AND AN AMAZINGLY GRACIOUS TURN OF PHRASE. And by weaving in bits of autobiography, Dowd has given us much more..."

—BARBARA EHRENREICH

MONTHLY REVIEW PRESS

1-800-670-9499

122 WEST 27th STREET • NEW YORK, NY 10001

To discover how good for your psyche *The Nation* can be, just mail the coupon below. It will bring you a full 6 months of *The Nation*—24 issues—for just \$15.95, a savings of \$44 off the newsstand price.

The Nation.

SPEED READING

Uncluttered ego

Lovely Me: The Life of Jacqueline Susann

By Barbara Seaman

Reprinted by Seven Stories Press

480 pp., \$14.95

By Barbara Garson

What is a nice feminist like Barbara Seaman doing writing a biography of Jacqueline Susann? (And what am I doing reading it in one degenerate gulp and wishing there was more?)

Seaman, author of *The Doctor's Case Against the Pill* (1969), is credited through both her writing and organizing with creating today's women's health movement. Indeed, she became interested in Susann as an example of a woman who died early of breast cancer.

Jackie Susann was a Philadelphia girl who came to New York in 1936 determined to win fame and fortune no matter what. She became a hanger-on/show girl of the Walter Winchell-Ethel Merman Broadway scene—an accomplishment, considering she was horse-faced and talentless—and married a show-biz PR man. Three decades later, after discovering she had breast cancer and still bent on *being* someone, she wrote two barely readable novels about her celebrity/media/pill scene, *Valley of the Dolls* and *The Love Machine*. Then she used all her contacts to make them the fastest-selling, biggest books in all of publishing history. In the process, she invented the modern book tour and turned herself into the richest self-made woman in America.

Barbara Seaman could have presented her subject as a proto-feminist. Susann's quintessential quote—"The two most important words for a new bride to learn are *room service*"—might suggest that she rejected the traditional female position (at least the standing one, at the stove). Or

Seaman could have presented Jackie as a Marilyn Monroe-like reverse role model. It would have been easy to cast her as a poor, benighted pre-feminist interested in all the wrong things—minks, caviar, other people's husbands.

But the joy of *Lovely Me: The Life of Jacqueline Susann* is that Seaman doesn't position Susann at all. The author just stands there wide-eyed and fascinated by that greedy, generous, tough, maudlin egomaniac.

This big bio treats us to a smattering of sex, which Susann seems to have engaged in not so much as a feeling but as a hobby for fun and profit. There's also a lot of true gossip from the worlds of theater, publishing and early television. But the most puzzling and intriguing area to me is the description of Susann's friendships.

When she first came to New York, Susann made friends among the show girls and models. Naturally, they passed leads and contacts around among themselves. Later, she moved upscale to women like Helen Gurley Brown, Doris Day and Johnny Carson's wife, Joanne. These were obviously people who could do things for each other. At their get-togethers, the agenda would be to "laugh, cry, swap clothing, plot revenge." On her fanatically focused book tours, the only diversion Susann would allow herself was to shop for the perfect this or that for a friend getting divorced, married or over a suicide attempt. Her cronies were all ambitious, all greedy, but all loyally ambitious and greedy on behalf of one another. Was this friendship or networking?

Could I have been one of Susann's friends? I probably would have been turned off by her overt ambition. Yet I'm also envious of the uncluttered ego that allowed her to use and be used with grace. I'm fascinated by Susann's ability to want and to ask, to like the people who gave her things and hate the people who took things away.

I have an aunt, still glamorous at 70, who'll crow about the diamond or mink she got out of some guy. Then she'll take the fur coat right off her back (at least if it's her second best fur) and hand it to a new friend who needs a little cheering up. She was always my favorite aunt. I'm still drawn to her at family gatherings, and the warmth is mutual. Unfortunately we both get terribly uncomfort-

able in less than half an hour.

I have a feeling I might be just as uncomfortable after half an hour with Jackie Susann in person. Yet I spent hours guiltily reading *Lovely Me*. There's something inspired about Seaman's half-envious, half-above-it-all point of view. We learn all the truth that could possibly be known about a woman who was inauthentic even in her own diaries. Come to think of it, who do we ever pose for if not ourselves? ◀

Barbara Garson is the author of the play *MacBird* and two classic books about work, *All the Livelong Day* and *The Electronic Sweatshop* (both Penguin).



©1997 TERRY LABAN

C L A S S I F I E D S

► HELP WANTED

IN THESE TIMES seeks an assistant editor. Responsibilities include editing, supervising fact-checking by interns, copy-editing and proof-reading. Candidates must demonstrate familiarity with the magazine. Starting salary \$18,000 plus 4 weeks vacation and full benefits. Minorities and women strongly encouraged to apply. Send cover letter, résumé, two writing samples and the names of three references to Deidre McFadyen, Executive Editor, *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

LARGE, PROGRESSIVE MIDWEST public service union seeks candidates for: •**Senior contract administration position.** Should have experience in negotiations, arbitration, legal procedures. Duties include overseeing all aspects of contract enforcement, as well as development of local union capacity to handle grievances. Supervisory experience helpful. •**Organizing campaign research and community support position.** Should have experience in labor movement or community organizations; excellent verbal and written communication skills; strong research and strategic development abilities. Duties include campaign develop-

ment, membership and community outreach, coalition-building, public relations, research and writing.

•**Lead organizer position.** Should have previous union organizing experience; ability to train and direct staff; strong communication skills. Duties include organizing campaign development; direct organizing; first contract campaigns.

Competitive salaries; excellent benefits. Send résumés to: Minnie Perez, AFSCME Council 31, 29 N. Wacker St., #800, Chicago, IL 60606.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: STATEWIDE environmental organization working on pollution, citizen assistance, labor & environmental justice seeks Director with effective foundation fundraising & grassroots organizing skills. Salary based on experience. Excellent benefits/health. Send résumé, writing sample, 3 references to Citizens' Environmental Coalition, 33 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12210. Fax: (518) 465-8349. Union Shop/EOE.

CAQ (COVERT ACTION QUARTERLY) seeks editorial staff member with journalism experience, ability to meet deadlines and work independently. Development skills a plus. Understanding of U.S./world politics required. Women/people of color encouraged. Résumé by July 15 to

CAQ Jobsearch, 1500 Mass. Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20005.

CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR: The New Party is a new progressive political party that has won 130 of its first 200 races around the country. It seeks an experienced organizer to train, supervise and support local staff and leadership in building political power in working-class and of-color communities. Will help local affiliates develop and implement political, fundraising, membership and leadership development plans. Must have labor,

community, or political organizing experience and experience supervising organizers. Must be able to travel. Women and minority applicants strongly encouraged. Salary BOE. Send resume, letter to Dan Cantor, 122 S. Main St., Suite 270, Ann Arbor, MI 48104; fax 313-747-6794.

PROGRESSIVE WEEKLY NEWS-MAGAZINE seeks detail-oriented, impeccably organized, highly motivated editorial assistant to work on all aspects of editorial process for Books and the Arts section. Candidates should have excellent written and oral communications skills; fact-checking, editing and administrative experience; and a passion for books. Position requires an ability to meet strict weekly deadlines and coordinate copy flow. People of color strongly encouraged to apply. Send résumé, cover letter and writing sample to *The Nation*, Box CL 18, 72 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10011. No calls or faxes, please. AA/EOE

COMMUNITY JOBS: The Employment Newspaper for the Non-Profit Sector. Join over 50,000 job-seekers in reading a unique monthly publica-

GUATEMALA

A Reality Tour October 10-18

Peace at Last? Witness the changes since the signing of the peace accords. Meet the Mayan Peoples Union & campesino committees.

GLOBAL EXCHANGE • 800-497-1994

Socialist

A democratic socialist view of life and politics from the Socialist Party USA.
\$9.00 per year (6 issues).

516 W. 25th St. #404, NY, NY 10001
(212) 691-0776

JEWISH CURRENTS

July-August, 1997 Issue

"Towards Reviving the Peace Process" and "Judaism, Secularism, Jewishness," editorials; "Here I Am—at 90!," Morris U. Schappes; "USSR Archives on Stalin's Anti-Semitism," review by Lyber Katz; "No One Must Be Forgotten," Yomtov Derbaremdiker.

Single issue: \$3 (USA only).
Subscription: \$30 yearly (USA only).

JEWISH CURRENTS
Dept. T, Suite 601,
22 E. 17 St., New York, NY 10003.

Can a 4-page monthly paper stir up a Workers Revolution?

The NEW UNIONIST is trying!

We don't have space to waste so each issue gets right to the point —

• Economic, social and environmental problems can't be solved under capitalism. Fighting for a *new system* is the only practical course of action.

• *Real socialism* is not state control from the top down. It's a stateless *workplace democracy* from the bottom up.

• One big union of the working class — blue-collar, white-collar, pink-collar, hot-under-the-collar — will give us the economic power to fight the corporations today, and manage *our* economy tomorrow.

• A workers' political party with a single demand — *The Workplaces to the Workers!* — can educate and rally the majority for a revolution at the ballot box, the people's mandate for *Economic Democracy*.

\$5 for 12 issues to:

NEW UNIONIST, 2309 Nicollet,
#102-A, Minneapolis MN 55404

ART SALE

- ◊ Most illustrations, cartoons and collages appearing in *In These Times* are available for reprint.
- ◊ Many originals are available for purchase.
- ◊ In *In These Times* illustrators are available for hire on a freelance basis.

Call 773-772-0100, x246,
or FAX 773-772-4180



tion containing more than 200 new job listings (in Environment, Arts, International, Health, Youth, Civil Rights, Housing, Human Services, etc.). Featuring informative articles, book reviews, resource lists, profiles of nonprofit organizations and the people who found them. Contact: Community Jobs, 1001 Connecticut Ave. NW, Ste. 838, Wash., DC 20036.

IN THESE TIMES seeks volunteer interns with an interest in progressive politics and independent publishing to help with web-page design, data collection, and radio marketing. Send résumé and cover letter to Jake Blankenship, ITT, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

► PUBLICATIONS

WHIRL—forum for diverse perspectives. Radical politics, ecology, culture, and the spirit. Sample: \$2 cash. POB 5304-T, Atlanta, GA 31107.

DO YOU HAVE spanking fantasies? We do—hundreds—and ours are for sale. Romantic, erotic, disciplinary, wherever the muse wanders. For a 24-page catalogue send \$3.00 to CF

New Political Science

Radical scholarship on today's political issues.
Special price! \$25 for 4 issues

Gvt. Dpt., Suffolk Univ.,
Boston, MA 02108
617-573-8126

STUDY IN CUBA

• Language instruction at the University of Havana

• Cultural immersion
• Salsa y playa

OFFERED MONTHLY

GLOBAL EXCHANGE 1.800.497.1994

Publications, Box 706TT, E. Setauket, NY.

► FOR SALE

Two 17" monochrome Apple monitors. Both are in good working order and include necessary video cards. \$125 each, or \$200 for both. Call (773) 772-0100, ext. 239.

► FOR RENT

CHICAGO—SMALL OFFICE SPACE for business or personal use. \$150/month includes util. Use of office equipment negotiable. Call Jim Weinstein at (773) 772-0100, ext. 223.

► FOREIGN LANGUAGES

SPANISH IN GUANAJUATO—TWO weeks, \$255. Instituto Falcon, Jorge Barroso, Mora 158, Guanajuato, Gto 36000, Mexico. Ph/Fax: (473) 2-36-94. <http://www.infonet.com.mx/falcon>.

SPANISH, CULTURE, TOURS, at Escuela Azteca. Summer in beautiful Cuernavaca. \$220 two weeks. Intensive grammar all levels. Weekend tours. Minicourses with Ross Gandy, Ph.D. (Mexico: Reform or Revolu-

tion?). Live with Mexican family. For brochure: call (52-73)-15-24-69. Address: ESCUELA AZTECA, Apdo. Postal 76-005; 04201 Mexico, D.F.

A PEOPLE VACATION in beautiful Guatemala. Personalized Spanish classes at indigenous owned school. Volunteer opportunities. Fantastic excursions. R&B with local family plus 5 hrs/day of classes is \$130/wk. Contact CBA, 1432 Elizabeth Street, Lexington, KY 40503, (606) 278-5008. E-mail pwuff@uky.campus.mci.net.

► MISCELLANEOUS

GOV'T FORECLOSED homes from pennies on \$1. Delinquent tax, Repo's, REO's. Your area. Toll free (800) 218-9000, Ext. H-3077 for current listings.

SEIZED CARS from \$175. Porsches, Cadillacs, Chevys, BMW's, Corvettes. Also Jeeps, 4WD's. Your area. Toll free (800) 218-9000, Ext. A-3077 for current listings.

ABOLISH ZOO PRISONS. No Animals in carnivals, circuses. Contact PO Box 428, Watertown, NY 13601-0428 or (315) 782-1858.

► BUMPER STICKERS

"DON'T BLAME ME, I VOTED FOR RALPH." \$2.50. NY residents add 8.25% sales tax. M.A.R.S. Services, P.O. Box 796, Bridgehampton, NY 11932.

► PERSONALS

EROTIC, INTELLIGENT, imaginative conversation—Discreet, personal and pleasurable. Please inquire (617) 661-3849.

CONCERNED SINGLES NEWSLETTER

links compatible singles who care about peace, social justice, gender equity, racism, and the environment. Nationwide. Since 1984. All ages.

FREE SAMPLE: Box 444-IT, Lenox Dale, MA 01242; ☎ (413) 445-6309; OR <http://www.concernedsingles.com>

GOOD VIBRATIONS



Friendly, informative catalog of sex toys, books & videos, \$4.

1210 Valencia #1T
San Francisco, CA
94110

CHIAPAS

CHALLENGING HISTORY

INDIGENOUS VIEWPOINTS ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN SOUTHERN MEXICO

SPECIAL EDITION OF *AKWEKON JOURNAL*.
SINGLE ISSUE: \$14.00 PPD. ONE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION:
\$18.00 (U.S.) CHECK/VISA/MC TO:
300-IT CALDWELL HALL,
CORNELL UNIVERSITY, ITHACA, NY 14853

IN THESE TIMES classified ads work like your own sales force.

Word Rates:

95¢ per word / 1-2 issues
85¢ per word / 3-5 issues
80¢ per word / 6-9 issues
75¢ per word / 10-19 issues
65¢ per word / 20+ issues

Display Inch Rates:

\$30 per inch / 1-2 issues
\$28 per inch / 3-5 issues
\$26 per inch / 6-9 issues
\$24 per inch / 10-19 issues
\$22 per inch / 20+ issues

Thomas Paine VIDEOCASSETTE

This educational, "very informative," and "fascinating" 40-minute video, written and hosted by Thomas Paine Scholar Carl Shapiro, was telecast via cable TV throughout northern New Jersey in the spring of 1992. In this original, unedited video, the essential meaning of Paine's extraordinary career as revolutionary writer and foremost exponent of democratic principles is recounted in a presentation "sure in its content" and clear in its delivery. A discussion of little-known but significant incidents in Paine's life adds immeasurably to this memorable video.

VHS cassette, \$25.00 ppd. (USA)

INDEPENDENT PUBLICATIONS, P.O. BOX 102, RIDGEFIELD, NJ 07657

Classified ads must be prepaid. Send your copy, coupon, and payment to:
IN THESE TIMES, Classified Ads, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

Enclosed is my check for \$_____ for _____ issue(s).

Please indicate desired heading _____

Advertiser _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Continued from page 40

In 1965, when Kesey first set out across the country in his brightly colored bus, the cultural significance of his deeds was pretty easy to grasp. His best-selling novel, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, featured a rugged individualist lobotomized by the totalitarian "Combine." The writer himself pulled hilarious anti-order japes and generally weirded straitlaced people out wherever he went.

More than three decades later, a great deal has obviously changed. This Borders is part of a hip, coffee-serving chain that pushes rugged, independent book dealers into extinction. Across the street is the Century Shopping Center, a boutique complex "where progressive people shop," according to the sign above the door. Just down the way is a Starbucks emblazoned with peace symbols.

Kesey's response to all the obvious changes in commercial culture is ... to ignore them. Despite his interest in the Internet, he seems frozen in the past. Granted, a few things have changed in his entourage's equipment: The bus is a 1947, not the 1938 model the Pranksters drove in the '60s. The Pranksters have also eased up on the LSD, and they use videotape to record their cavortings now, not film. But among the ironic and hagiographic images of various pop-cultural figures that decorate the bus (Bogart, Gary Cooper, Pogo, the Beatles, Donovan, a big Kerouac hovering near the door), I can find none that date from later than 1969. One of the Pranksters I speak to refers to Woodstock as something that happened quite recently.

There are many interpretations of the '60s, but so far only the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame has been able to construct a multi-million dollar edifice for the propagation of its understanding of cultural legitimacy. But the museum's take on the decade is curious: The place is a shrine to shrine-desecration, supported by the corporate titans of the post-'60s economy. The museum's exhibits and the text in the book Kesey is here to promote always seem to revert back to a knee-jerk avant-gardism: The *really cool* people were the ones who were there first. "The media may have dubbed 1967 the Summer of Love," runs one bit of text on a wall at the museum, "but for those who were there, 1966 was the real Summer of Love in both London and San Francisco."

And if countercultural authenticity is the object, you can't get much realer or there-first than Ken Kesey, a fact which still hovers over him like a halo.

Inside the bus, prosperous-looking Pranksters, one of whom has teased suburban hair and wears an expensive pink windbreaker with the collar turned fashionably up, pass around a bottle of gin. I identify a representative of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame by her cellular phone and ask, "Does anybody think there shouldn't be a rock 'n' roll museum?"

She strenuously denies the suggestion. The musicians (she calls them "artists") have wanted to help the museum grow, she tells me, as have such corporate sponsors as

AT&T, Radio Shack and Levi Strauss. And it's not a traditional museum experience, either, she tells me. It's more "nostalgic." People meet in front of exhibits and recognize one another as kindred spirits: "You mean you were there, too?" they ask each other.

Finally, my turn comes to talk to Kesey. He, too, tells me that the bus tour "never stopped." He has no doubt about the relevance today of a bus trip like the famed one of 1965. The world has improved dramatically, thanks to the various '60s movements, but it has room to improve more, he says. The bus ideals, whatever they are, represent "the way we've got to become as a nation if we're going to mature."

Has he ever heard of anyone who thinks the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame is a bad idea? I ask him. Of course not, he says. In a musical sense, too, the '60s stand head and shoulders above the present: "Nothing has happened since in music," he insists.

Those who "were there" will probably remember one of Kesey's most famous Prankster escapades: In 1965, he attended a massive Berkeley antiwar rally where he accused the crowd of partaking in the same evil draught as the Pentagon war-makers. "You're playing their game," Kesey announced, according to Tom Wolfe's account. The Pentagon and the antiwar movement were largely identical, in Kesey's view; each ardently believed in a dead-end game of egotism and fruitless order.

Wolfe seems to believe that Kesey single-handedly derailed the New Left with that line, and with the "great Day-Glo freakout" that he and the Pranksters then displayed for the assembled cameras of the nation. "It's the only thing the martial spirit can't stand," Wolfe wrote, "a put-on, a prank, a shuck, a goose in the anus." Maybe Wolfe was right. Maybe Kesey's version of the '60s uprising was the most order-upsetting strategy possible. But I wonder, as Kesey ascends the stairway to the hushed Hall of Fame, the Pranksters japing and cavorting behind, does it ever occur to him whose game he is playing now? ◀

Thomas Frank is the author of *The Conquest of Cool* (University of Chicago Press, forthcoming this fall), a book about how admen were cool even before Ken Kesey was.



The Progressive POPULIST

A Monthly Journal from the Heartland

News and views from the Heartland with Jim Hightower, Ralph Nader, Jesse Jackson, Eugene McCarthy, Molly Ivins, Norman Solomon, other plutocrat-pluckers and the best of the alternative press. Your antidote to the daily news. *Finalist, Utne Reader's Best New Title of 1995. 12 issues \$18.*

For a FREE sample Call toll-free 1-800-205-7067

Back on the bus

By Thomas Frank



As you may have heard, Ken Kesey, the famed cultural provocateur, jump-started his famed bus, "Further," and undertook a short journey in May from his farm in Oregon to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland. There, the bus became part of an exhibit commemorating the 30th anniversary of the famed "Summer of Love." If you've read Tom Wolfe's book about Kesey's famed doings, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, you have an idea of what the bus looks like and what Kesey and his friends, the famed "Merry Pranksters," did while on board. So we'll skip all that.

I was curious about how the event the Pranksters were calling "The Grandfather Tour" would fit into our seemingly endless national fascination with the '60s. Just a few weeks ago on C-SPAN, I watched a collection of notable graduates of the Harvard Class of 1969 discuss what we learned from the era of revolt. I'd recently read Robert Bork's hallucinatory *Slouching Towards Gomorrah*, in which "the '60s" are shorthand for cultural treason. I'd thumbed through a recent academic volume in which a renowned Rimbaud scholar seriously affirms Jim Morrison's oft-repeated comparisons of himself to the French Symbolist poet of the mid-19th century. What light could Kesey and the Pranksters shed on the meaning of the decade of glory?

I meet the bus in Chicago, where Kesey and his entourage appear at a Borders bookstore for a book signing. The Pranksters don't actually drive the bus from Oregon to Chicago. A flatbed truck hauls the bus, and the Pranksters fly in to meet it. When the bus does move under its own power, it is followed by a number of support vehicles, including one fitted out to cyber-cast the jolly proceedings. On occasion, as when it enters Cleveland, the bus receives a police escort.

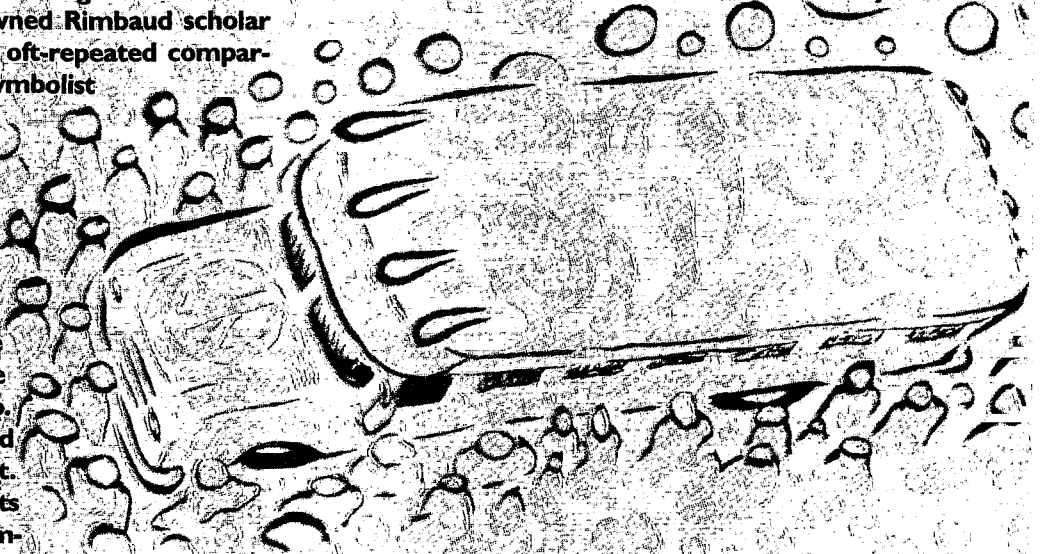
At the Borders signing, Kesey's publicist has instructed him to apply his autograph only to copies of *I Want To Take You Higher*, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame's

look back at "The Psychedelic Era." The dictate deters no one. A considerable percentage of the throng bring along copies of Kesey's books as well as copies of *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*. Kesey seems perfectly happy to sign anything.

A burly 61-year-old fellow in an orange beret, Kesey sits at a table behind red velvet ropes and Pinkerton guards. Several hundred fans stretch around the perimeter of the bookstore. When their turn comes to meet Kesey, many quiz the novelist about minute details of '60s events as a polite way of establishing that they, too, were part of the original "secret society."

Kesey seems remarkably good-natured about the whole thing. He holds screaming babies and smiles for photographs. A reporter asks his opinion about the possibilities for "expanded consciousness" through the Internet, and Kesey appears genuinely interested in the idea.

The Borders employees dress up in tie-dyed items and floppy hats, and play Janis Joplin and the Rolling Stones over the P.A. system. Everyone seems to be having fun, even the Chicago police, who keep the traffic moving around the bus, fragrant with patchouli and clove cigarettes, which is parked just outside the door of the store. Onlookers crowd around the bus, one-upping each other with arcana about the vehicle's history.



A publicist tells me Kesey and his entourage will stop in Ann Arbor, Mich., the next day, and after that in Bowling Green, Ohio, the seat of a respected institute for the study of American popular culture. The scholars there, too, plan to recognize Kesey as a historical figure of great moment.

Continued on page 39

©1997 KT BOYCE